

Epigrams of Manuel Philes on the Theotokos tes Peges and Its Art

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During the reign of Andronikos II (1282–1328), the monastery of the Theotokos tes Peges (the Virgin of the Source), located just outside the land walls of Constantinople, underwent a period of revival.¹ The Pege monastery, which had been founded in the fifth or sixth century on the site of a healing spring, functioned almost continually throughout the Byzantine centuries, but like so many monasteries fell into decline during the Latin occupation of Constantinople following the Fourth Crusade. Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, the fourteenth-century ecclesiastical historian, is our principal informant on the history of the monastery and its miraculous shrine in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. He states that Pege was among the monasteries taken over by the Latins after 1204, that its sanctuary was rearranged in conformity with the Latin rite, and that the spring waters lost their miraculous healing powers. He comments that even after the reconquest of Constantinople by the Byzantines in 1261, the *hagiasma* water remained ineffective because of Michael VIII's impious support for the Council of Lyons of 1274, which brought about the submission of the Byzantine patriarchate to the pope. It was only with the accession of Andronikos II, who reversed his father's ecclesiastical policy, that the waters of the holy spring began once more to effect healing cures.² Although Xanthopoulos gives no precise date for the return of Greek Orthodox monks to Pege, it was probably not long before 1300, since at the time that he wrote his *Logos*

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¹The two basic books on Pege are [E. Gedeon], *Ἡ Ζωοδόχος Πηγή καὶ τὰ ἱερὰ αὐτῆς προσαρτήματα* (Athens, 1886) and MISN (=M.Is. Nomides), *Ἡ Ζωοδόχος Πηγή* (Istanbul, 1937). See also S. Bénay, "Le monastère de la Source à Constantinople," *EO* 3 (1899), 223–28, 295–300, and R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin. 1. Le siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat oecuménique. 3. Les églises et les monastères* (Paris, 1969), 223–28 (hereafter, Janin, *EglisesCP*).

²A. Pamperis, *Λόγος διαλαμβάνων τὰ περὶ τῆς συστάσεως τοῦ σεβασμίου οἴκου τῆς ὑπεραγίας Δεσποίνης ἡμῶν Θεοτόκου τῆς ἀειζώου πηγῆς* ([Leipzig], 1802), 63–65; hereafter cited as Xanthopoulos, *Logos*.

on the miracles (between 1306 and 1320) the arrangement of the sanctuary was still in Latin style.³

A variety of evidence suggests a marked revival of the cult of the Virgin at Pege during the first part of the fourteenth century. First of all, there was the resurgence of miracles at the shrine: the *Logos* of Xanthopoulos records fifteen new miracles during the reign of Andronikos II, most of them healings effected by the holy spring water or mud from the shrine.⁴ Second, the miraculous cult was promoted and publicized by Xanthopoulos in the *Logos*, a lengthy account (one hundred pages in the Pamperis edition) of the history of the shrine, the miracles that occurred there between the fifth and twelfth centuries, and the miraculous cures wrought in his own time. Third, Xanthopoulos wrote an *akolouthia* for the newly instituted feastday of the inauguration (*enkainia*) of the church of the Theotokos tes Peges on the Friday of the week following Easter;⁵ it replaced the feast of St. Peter.⁶ Fourth, the new epithet of Zoodochos Pege (meaning “life-receiving,” referring to the Virgin’s reception of Christ into her womb) was evidently introduced at this time for the Virgin of the Source. Although this epithet had been previously applied to the Virgin in hymns,⁷ it was not applied to a specific iconographic type of the Virgin before the fourteenth century.⁸ The application of the term ζωοδόχος πηγή to the Constantinopolitan shrine seems to begin in the first quarter of the fourteenth century, and the transition can perhaps be seen in the writings of Xanthopoulos. He applies the term ζωοδόχος πηγή to the Virgin once in his *akolouthia*,⁹ and in the *Logos* once uses the phrase τὸ ζωοδόχον . . . ἐκ τῆς ἱερᾶς πηγῆς . . . νᾶμα,¹⁰ but seems to prefer the

³Xanthopoulos, *Logos*, 63: δείκνυσι δὲ καὶ ἡ μυστικὴ τράπεζα ἄχρι καὶ ἐς δεῦρο λατινικῶς διεσκευασμένη. I have determined the range of dates for the composition of the *Logos* as follows: the text (p. 85) mentions a miracle which took place in 1306, thus establishing a terminus post quem. The *Ecclesiastical History* of Xanthopoulos, which must have been completed by 1320, the date usually assigned to the unique deluxe manuscript in Vienna, Vind. hist. gr. 8 (cf. H. Hunger, *Katalog der griechischen Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek. Teil I. Codices historici, codices philosophici et philologici* [Vienna, 1961], 14), contains excerpts from the *Logos* and states that he had already completed his account of the miracles at Pege (PG 147, col. 77B); 1320 is thus the terminus ante quem.

⁴These miracles, numbered 49–63, are found on pp. 66–94 of Xanthopoulos’ *Logos*.

⁵Cf. Πεντηκοστάριον χαρμόσυνον (Athens, n.d.), 16–22.

⁶Cf. A. Dmitrievskij, *Opisanie liturgiĭeskikh rukopisej* 1 (Kiev, 1895), 176. In addition, John Koukouzeles, who died before 1341, wrote two poems on the Zoodochos Pege, one beginning ὁ ποταμὸς τῶν δωρεῶν, the other τὴν ζωοδόχον πηγήν; unpublished, they are preserved in a sixteenth-century manuscript, Lavra E155 (S. Eustratiades, “Ἰωάννης ὁ Κουκουζέλης, ὁ Μαίστωρ, καὶ ὁ χρόνος τῆς ἀκμῆς αὐτοῦ,” *Ἐπ.Ἐτ.Βυζ.Σπ.* 14 [1938], 11–12).

⁷See, for example, Joseph the Hymnographer, *Μηναῖον τοῦ Δεκεμβρίου* (Venice, 1877), 144; Clement, “On John Klimax,” in *Μηναῖον Μαρτίου* (Athens, 1977), for 30 March, p. 248, Ode 9.

⁸In images of the Zoodochos Pege, the earliest surviving examples bearing this inscription are at the Aphenidiko in Mistra (built before 1311) (S. Dufrenne, *Les programmes iconographiques des églises byzantines de Mistra* [Paris, 1970], 8, 41 and note 425 [=Fig. 1]) and in the mosaic above Tomb H in the inner narthex at Chora in Constantinople. The latter tomb was destined for Demetrios Palaiologos, probably the youngest son of Andronikos II, who died ca. 1340; cf. P. Underwood, *The Kariye Djami*, I (New York, 1966), 297–98. The mosaic could have been installed earlier, however.

Pre-fourteenth century texts about the monastery at Pege always use just the term Pege; cf., for example, the anonymous tenth-century *Miracula* (*ActaSS*, Nov. III, 878–889) and chapter 18 of the *De Ceremoniis* describing the emperor’s annual visit to the monastery on Ascension Day (ed. A. Vogt, *Le livre des cérémonies*, I [Paris, 1935], 101–5).

The use of the terms πηγή and ζωοδόχος πηγή is summarized by Nomides in *Ζωοδόχος Πηγή*, 20–29, 34–36.

⁹Cf. Πεντηκοστάριον, 16.

¹⁰Xanthopoulos, *Logos*, 35.

terms πηγή, ζωοφόρος πηγή, or ἀείζωος πηγή.¹¹ Fifth, in the early decades of the fourteenth century new icon types for the Zoodochos Pege were developed, first depicting an orant Virgin with a frontal Christ child on her breast (Fig. 1), later showing the Virgin and Child sitting in a basin from which water flowed (Figs. 2–3).¹² This new iconography was probably derived from a mosaic image above the holy spring, perhaps installed during the reign of Andronikos. Xanthopoulos singles out this mosaic for special attention in his *Logos*, describing it as follows:

In the middle of the dome, where there is the ceiling of the church, the artist perfectly depicted with his own hands the life-bearing Source who bubbles forth from her bosom the most beautiful and eternal infant in the likeness of transparent and drinkable water which is alive and leaping; upon seeing it one might liken it [the Source] to a cloud making water flow down gently from above, as if a soundless rain; and from there [sc. above] looking down toward the water <in the *phiale*> so as to render it effective [i.e., miracle-working], incubating it, so to speak, and rendering it fertile.¹³

In sum, there seems to have been a deliberate effort at this time to promote the shrine of Pege and to attract pilgrims to its spring which had only recently regained its healing power. Xanthopoulos, no doubt as the result of a commission by the monastery, wrote his treatise on the miracles, both old and new, that took place at the shrine; he was also asked to write an *akolouthia* for a newly instituted feastday; finally, one can suggest a close connection between the installation of a new mosaic image of the Zoodochos Pege and the revival of the efficacy of the spring water, since Xanthopoulos emphasizes that it was the mosaic of the Virgin reflected in the basin that gave the water its miraculous power.

The sources of evidence cited so far can all be linked to the desire of the monastery to promote the cult of the Zoodochos Pege, and are primarily hagiographical in nature. Fortunately, there are also other independent sources which confirm the popularity of Pege as a healing shrine during the early fourteenth century. The first such text is the interesting letter of Michael Gabras describing the death of his brother John in 1319/20 from a disease that may have been dropsy.¹⁴ When John fell ill and various parts of his

¹¹See, for example, Xanthopoulos, *Logos* 1, 13, 88; *Ecclesiastical History*, PG 147, cols. 72A, 73D, 77B. Note also the use of the phrase ζωοδόχος πηγή by Koukouzeles; cf. footnote 6, above. John VI Kantakouzenos, who composed his *History* in the third quarter of the fourteenth century, once uses ζωοδόχος πηγή to describe the shrine (*Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris historiarum libri IV*, ed. L. Schopen [Bonn, 1828], I, 426 [hereafter, Kant.]), but elsewhere calls it ἀένναος πηγή or simply Πηγή (Kant. I, 409, 427; III, 300).

In 1321, Andronikos III issued a chrysobull giving to the patriarch Isaias the monastery of the Zoodochos in Constantinople; after the death of Isaias the monastery was to be transferred to the Great Lavra on Athos. The editors of this act argue that this monastery must be distinguished from the more famous Zoodochos Pege located outside the walls of the city; cf. P. Lemerle et al., *Actes de Lavra*, III (Paris, 1979), no. 119, pp. 9–11.

¹²D. Pallas, 'Ἡ Θεοτόκος Ζωοδόχος Πηγή,' *Αρχ.Δελτ.* 26 (1971), 201–24. Natalia Teteriatnikov has recently made a special study of this iconography for a forthcoming article.

¹³Xanthopoulos, *Logos*, 13: τῇ γε μὴν μέσῃ θόλῳ, ἣ ὄροφος καθίσταται τῷ νεῷ, αὐτὴν ὁ πλάστης τὴν ζωοφόρον πηγὴν χερσὶν ἰδίαις ἀρίστως διέγραψε, τὸ πάγκαλον βρέφος καὶ προαιώνιον, ὡς διειδές τι καὶ πότιμον ὕδωρ, ζῶν καὶ ἀλλόμενον, τῶν κόλπων ἀναμορμύρουσαν. εἰκάσαις ἂν νεφέλῃν αὐτὴν κατιδὼν ἡρέμα ὡς ὑετὸν ἀποφῆτὶ τὸ ὕδωρ ἄνωθεν καταρρέουσιν, ἀκαεῖθεν τῷ ὕδατι ἀτενίζουσιν ἐνεργὸν αὐτὸ καθιστὰν, ἐπαλάζουσιν ὡς ἂν τις εἴποι, καὶ γόνιμον παριστάνουσιν. . . .

¹⁴*Die Briefe des Michael Gabras (ca. 1290–nach 1350)*, ed. G. Fatouros (Vienna, 1973), II, 699–705, ep. 457.

body began to swell, he first consulted physicians; but when they were helpless to relieve his symptoms (a standard hagiographical *topos*), he turned to the Mother of God, and asked to be carried to her shrine at Pege. Upon his arrival there his health showed signs of improvement, but his recovery proved to be temporary. He spent some time at the shrine, in assiduous prayer to the Virgin, refusing all nourishment except the holy spring water and a little fish.¹⁵ His thirst was such that he gulped down entire buckets of water, and finally died. This letter sheds valuable light on the way in which desperately ill Byzantines sought assistance from the Pege shrine when the doctors had given up all hope; it is an especially trustworthy source inasmuch as the narrative is not presented in the context of a collection of *miracula*, but is Gabras' anguished firsthand account of the slow death of his brother, who in the end failed to find miraculous healing in the waters of the Pege. One can even detect signs of a certain skepticism on the part of John Gabras' friends, including the emperor himself, who were distressed at his total reliance on the water of Pege and urged him to take adequate nourishment.

Additional sources on healing at Pege are passages from the histories of Nikephoros Gregoras and John Kantakouzenos, describing the miraculous cure of the emperor Andronikos III from a serious illness in 1330. They relate that when the emperor fell critically ill at Didymoteichon, he asked for healing water from the Pege shrine; after pouring it over his head (according to Gregoras), or drinking the water and anointing his skin with it (according to Kantakouzenos), he was cured within a few days. Kantakouzenos provides as well the important information that when Andronikos returned to Constantinople, he went immediately to the Pege church, accompanied by a throng of the faithful, to give thanks for his recovery.¹⁶

It is within this context of the revival of the cult of the Virgin of the Source that one must approach another group of texts which provide yet further evidence for the popularity of the Pege shrine in the first part of the fourteenth century. I am referring to a series of epigrams by Manuel Philes, devoted for the most part to icons of the Zoodochos Pege or to objects presented to the shrine by grateful recipients of healing cures. Although the bulk of Philes' poems was published almost 150 years ago,¹⁷ this prolific poet of the Palaiologan period (approximately 30,000 of his verses are preserved) has not yet received the attention he deserves.¹⁸ One goal of this paper is to demonstrate the

¹⁵It is tempting to speculate that he was eating fish that lived in the holy spring; if so, this letter would be the earliest text to refer to these fish, which are mentioned by an anonymous Russian pilgrim to Constantinople in 1390. Cf. George Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Washington, D.C., 1984), 325–26.

¹⁶*Nicephorus Gregoras: Byzantina historia*, Bonn ed. (1829) I, 442; Kant. I, 409–10, 426–27.

¹⁷*Manuelis Philae carmina*, ed. E. Miller, 2 vols. (Paris, 1855–57), hereafter cited as *Philes*, ed. Miller. An additional volume of poems was published by E. Martini about fifty years later (*Manuelis Philae carmina inedita* [Naples, 1900]), hereafter cited as *Philes*, ed. Martini. Yet other poems were published by E. Gedeon in *Μανουὴλ τοῦ Φιλῆ ἱστορικὰ ποιήματα, Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἀλήθεια*, vol. 4, year 3 (1882–83), 215–20, 244–50, 652–59 (hereafter, Gedeon, “Philes”). For a complete bibliography, see G. Stickler, *Manuel Philes und seine Psalmenmetaphrase* (Vienna, 1992), which also includes discussion of the Miller and Martini editions (pp. 71–84) and a useful listing of all the manuscripts containing works by Philes. One awaits with anticipation the new critical edition with German translation of the complete corpus of Philes' poems promised by G. Stickler and H.-V. Beyer.

¹⁸A rare example of literary analysis of one of Philes' poems is a recent article by Sarolta Takács, “Manuel Philes' Meditation on an Icon of the Virgin Mary,” *ByzF* 15 (1990), 277–88.



1 Apendiko, Mistra, fresco (photo: after D. Pallas, *Ἡ Θεοτόκος Ζωοδόχος Πηγή*, *Ἀρχ.Δελτ.* 26.1, pt. 1 [1971], pl. 45)



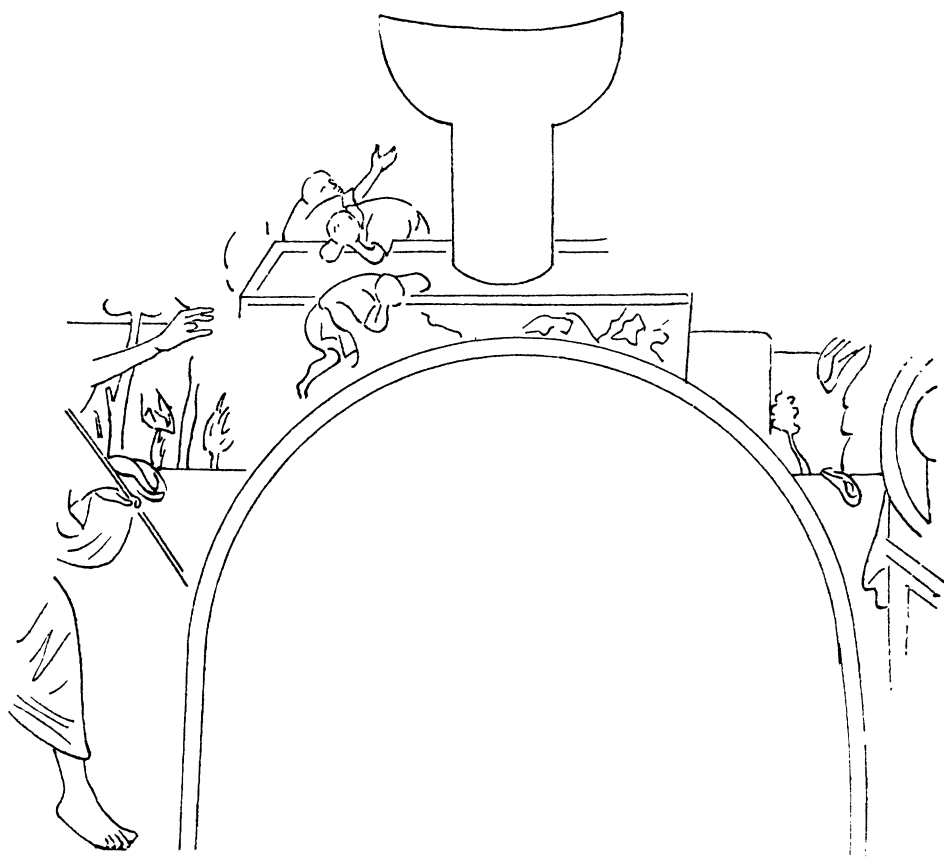
2 Hagioi Theodoroi, Mistra, line drawing of fresco
(photo: after G. Millet, *Monuments byzantins de Mistra* [Paris, 1910], pl. 90.2)



3 Monastery of St. Paul, Athos, fresco (photo: after Pallas, pl. 49)



4 Byzantine Museum, Athens, icon, no. 1147/T.657 (photo: *ibid.*, pl. 51)



5 Church of St. John, Mistra, line drawing of fresco (photo: after Millet, pl. 107.2)

kind of information that can be extracted from careful analysis of a group of his poems on a common theme.

The little that is known about Manuel Philes is based primarily on the internal evidence of his own poems, evidence that has been conveniently collected and analyzed by Günter Stickler. He concludes that Philes was born somewhere in Anatolia probably ca. 1270, by 1295 had been settled in Constantinople for some time, and in 1297 took part in an embassy to Toktay, khan of the Golden Horde. He seems to have died in the 1330s.¹⁹ Thus he was active during the reigns of the emperors Andronikos II and Andronikos III. It has already been noted that many of his epigrams are devoted to works of art, and provide useful information about the appearance or subject matter of these objects and about the patrons who commissioned them.²⁰ What has become more apparent as the result of discussions at the recent Dumbarton Oaks seminar on art and epigrams is that many of the shorter poems of Philes must have actually been inscribed on the work of art, that there was a much more intimate connection than previously realized between poetry and art, and between the poet, the artist, and the patron.

The first task of the present study was one of selection, that is, to decide which poems of Philes are indeed related to the Theotokos tes Peges. One of the inherent difficulties in studying the epigrams of Philes (or indeed any other Byzantine poet) is that one must view with caution the title or lemma of the poem, since it was often added later when the poem was being copied into a manuscript. The same poem may bear different titles in different manuscripts, or the title may be erroneous. Nonetheless, where the subject matter and imagery of the poem fit the title, it seems reasonable to assume that the lemma is correct. The core of this article, therefore, will be nine of the ten epigrams that are specifically linked with Pege by a lemma.²¹

As might be expected, these epigrams have a distinctive and evocative vocabulary connected with flowing water, the same vocabulary, by and large, which appears in the *akolouthia* and *Logos* of Xanthopoulos. In these particular Philes epigrams the word *πηγή* appears six times by itself, twice connected with words denoting life (*ζῶσα πηγή*, *ζωῆς πηγή*), and once in the verbal form *πηγάζω*.²² Philes uses *ῥόδωρ* five times, once alone, once linked with *ζωῆς*, and three times in the phrase *ζῶν ῥόδωρ*, taken from the story of the Samaritan woman at the well in the gospel of John (4:10,11).²³ The poet is also partial to words associated with “flow” or “gush,” such as *ροή*, *ζωτικὸν ῥεῖθρον*, and *ρεῦμα*, as well as *χέω*, *χύσις*, and *βλύζω*.²⁴ Other watery words used by Philes in association with Pege

¹⁹Stickler, *Philes*, 10–36.

²⁰Some use of his epigrams has been made, for example, by Ioli Kalavrezou in her *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, I (Vienna, 1985), 79–85, and Robert Nelson, *The Iconography of Preface and Miniature in the Byzantine Gospel Book* (New York, 1980), 33, no. 104.

²¹I have omitted discussion of the epigram on a monk who died of leprosy and was buried at Pege (*Philes*, ed. Miller, II, 390–93, App. no. 30), because it is only marginally related to art.

²²For *πηγή*, see poem 2 (below, my numbering), lines 2, 4; poem 3, line 1; poem 4, line 3; poem 7, line 8; poem 8, line 13. For *ζῶσα πηγή*, see poem 6, line 2; for *ζωῆς πηγή*, see poem 1, line 1; for *πηγάζω*, see poem 3, line 3.

²³For *ῥόδωρ*, cf. poem 6, line 3; for *ῥόδωρ ζωῆς*, cf. poem 3, line 1; for *ζῶν ῥόδωρ*, cf. poem 6, line 5, and poem 8, lines 13, 25.

²⁴For *ροή*, cf. poem 7, line 8, and poem 15, line 15; for *ζωτικὸν ῥεῖθρον* and *ρεῦμα*, cf. poem 4, line 3, and poem 15, line 17. For *χέω*, *χύσις* and *βλύζω*, cf. poem 8, line 25, and poem 3, lines 2 and 1.

are δρόσος, φλέψ, ὑγρός, and πολύκρουνος.²⁵ One also finds words meaning “cooling” and “refreshing,” such as ἀναψύχω and καταψύχω.²⁶ Finally, one should mention his relatively frequent allusions to miracles (τεράστιον, θαῦμα).²⁷

Similar imagery of flowing water is found in some other poems of Philes, which are addressed simply to “the Mother of God,” with no distinguishing epithet. Is it possible to link any of them as well with the Pege monastery or with an icon of the Zoodochos Pege? One should be cautious in making this assumption, because there were other *hagiasmata* in Constantinople associated with the Virgin, notably at Blachernai and the Hodegon monastery.²⁸ On the other hand, the lexical parallels are striking, and moreover in some cases these poems which lack any specific indication of being connected with the Theotokos tes Peges are grouped in the manuscript together with poems which are definitely assigned by lemmata to Pege.²⁹ I have thus added six epigrams to the group associated with Pege, namely those poems in which the language is especially suggestive of the combination of flowing water and miraculous healing; the reader is forewarned that the association with Pege is plausible, and indeed probable, but cannot be proved.

Thus, ten epigrams of Philes were definitely linked with the Pege monastery or the icon of the Zoodochos Pege, and I have identified at least six others which in all likelihood were addressed to the Virgin of the Source.³⁰ These figures are impressive when compared with the numbers of epigrams connected with the Pege monastery in earlier centuries. The first surviving poem which can be linked with Pege is a five-line epigram of George of Pisidia, which apparently alludes to an incident during the siege of Constantinople in 626 by the Persians, Avars, and Slavs, when Byzantine soldiers who sought refuge at the Pege monastery were able to overwhelm the enemy although greatly outnumbered.³¹ From the ninth century there is a series of six epigrams by Ignatios the Magistros

²⁵For δρόσος, see poem 7, line 7, and poem 8, line 10. For φλέψ, ὑγρός, and πολύκρουνος, see poem 1, line 4, and poem 2, line 3.

²⁶Cf. poem 1, line 3; poem 7, line 8; and poem 8, line 17.

²⁷For τεράστιον or τεράστια, see poem 1, line 3; poem 6, line 2; poem 7, line 22; poem 15, lines 2 and 22. For θαῦμα, see poem 2, line 4, and poem 3, line 2.

²⁸Cf. Janin, *EglisesCP* 169, 206–7. It is noteworthy that a poem included as an appendix to the *Hermeneia* of Dionysios of Fournā, which includes verses describing the Mother of God as πηγὴ θείου ὕδατος τοῦ ἀθανάτου and speaking of her νάματα, is labeled as suitable for the Virgin either as Zoodochos Pege or as Hodegetria; cf. Dionysios of Fournā, *Manuel d'iconographie chrétienne*, ed. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus (St. Petersburg, 1909), 230.

²⁹Note especially the five poems of the Escorial manuscript, numbered 156–157 and 161–163 by Miller, three of which (156–157, 163) bear lemmata mentioning Pege. These poems are included by me below as nos. 6–10.

³⁰It is possible that yet other poems of Philes were connected with the Pege shrine: prime candidates are Escorial, no. 166 (*Philes*, ed. Miller, I, 76–77; note its proximity in the Escorial manuscript to other Pege epigrams); Florence, nos. 114 and 115 (*Philes*, ed. Miller, I, 307–9); and *Philes*, ed. Martini, no. 67, the last three all relating to the same icon frame donated by Andronikos Komnenos Asan.

³¹L. Sternbach, “Georgii Pisidae carmina inedita,” *WSt* 14 (1892), 59–60. I am grateful to James Howard-Johnston for bringing this epigram to my attention. It is curious that this epigram bears the lemma εἰς πηγὴν instead of the more customary εἰς τὴν πηγὴν; nonetheless, I believe that it does refer to the Pege monastery because of the clear allusion to the Avar-Persian siege of 626. The story of the incident at the Pege monastery is found first in the eyewitness account of Theodore, *synkellos* of Hagia Sophia. In a homily delivered in 627, he reports that on the third day of the siege the Virgin enabled the Byzantines to inflict defeat on the enemy at Pege; cf. L. Sternbach, *Analecta Avarica* (Kraków, 1900), 9.37–10.12. A similar tale was recounted much later by Xanthopoulos in a lection on the Akathistos Hymn; cf. PG 92, col. 1349D.

describing a cycle of mosaics installed in the church at Pege when it was restored by Basil I after an earthquake caused the collapse of the dome.³² For the eleventh century, one or perhaps two poems of Christopher of Mytilene can be associated with the Pege monastery; one is entitled “On the cucumber bed in the vineyard at Pege,” the other, “On the well at the monastery of the Theotokos that was cleaned out.” A verse of the latter epigram in which the Mother of God is addressed as ζῶντος ὕδατος φρέαρ is reminiscent of the language of Philes, but does not conclusively link the poem with Pege.³³ A poem of John Mauropous from the same century contains language appropriate for Pege (ἐβλυξε . . . νᾶμα, ποτίζει, ῥέει ζωῆς ὕδωρ), but bears the title εἰς ῥέουσιν ὕδωρ in one manuscript, and εἰς τὸ λοῦμα τῶν Βλαχερνῶν in another.³⁴ Finally, I know of only one twelfth-century epigram related to Pege, verses composed by Manganeios Prodromos on behalf of the *sebastokratorissa* Irene to accompany a *peplos* which she donated to the monastery in thanksgiving for the miraculous cure of her son John Komnenos, who had been struck in the eye during a jousting tournament.³⁵ To sum up, we know of one poem from the seventh century related to Pege, six from the ninth century (all from one cycle), two or three from the eleventh, and one from the twelfth century. Thus the mere fact that Philes devoted at least ten epigrams, and perhaps sixteen or more, to the Virgin of the Source, represents yet further proof of an intensification of devotion to the cult of the Zoodochos Pege in the first part of the fourteenth century.

The epigrams of Philes related to Pege can be divided into three main categories, although sometimes the lines of demarcation are overlapping: (A) those addressed to an image of the Theotokos; (B) those connected with objects donated to the Pege shrine in thanksgiving, usually for healing; and (C) one possible example of a painting depicting a specific miraculous cure effected by the Virgin of the Source (see Table 1).

(A) IMAGES OF THE THEOTOKOS

The five epigrams in this group are all associated by their lemmata with the Pege shrine. Three of the poems that I have included in this category would be appropriate for either portable icons or monumental paintings of the Virgin of the Source; it should be noted that no Palaiologan examples of wooden panel icons of the Zoodochos Pege have survived, but they may well have existed in the fourteenth century. A fourth epigram was composed for a stone paten bearing an image of the Virgin as Zoodochos Pege, while the fifth poem seems to have been addressed to an image of the Virgin located at Pege, but of a different iconographic type. All five poems are short, consisting of only

³²See *The Greek Anthology*, ed. and trans. W. R. Paton, I (London-New York, 1927), 48–49, nos. 109–114.

³³*Die Gedichte des Christophoros Mitylenaios*, ed. E. Kurtz (Leipzig, 1903), 4, 66–68, nos. 7 and 105. Nicholas Constanas first pointed these poems out to me.

³⁴Cf. PG 120, col. 1176A and P. de Lagarde, *Ioannis Euchaitorum metropolitae quae in codice Vaticano Graeco 676 supersunt* (Göttingen, 1882), 37, no. 69.

³⁵Ed. E. Miller, *Annuaire des études grecques* 17 (1883), 36–37. On the accident, see K. Barzos, *Ἡ γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν*, II (Thessalonike, 1984), 146 and note 25. I am indebted for these references to Michael Jeffreys, who is preparing a new critical edition of the poems of Manganeios Prodromos. This poem contains the same imagery we find in Philes; cf. verses 15 and 16,

Πηγὴν σε τοῖνον ἠτύχησα χαρίτων,
πηγὴ χαριτόβρυτε τοῦ ζῶντος λόγου.

TABLE 1

Poem No. (my numbering)	Definitely Associated with Pege	Probably Associated with Pege	Number of Lines	Donor	Type of Object	Illness Cured
<i>Category A</i>						
1	X		4		Icon	
2	X		4		Icon	
3	X		4	Hieromonk Gabriel (or possibly he was the artist)	Icon?	
4	X		4		Stone <i>panagiarion</i>	
5	X		4		Icon	
<i>Category B</i>						
6	X		10	Monk Hilarion	Water reservoir	
7	X		24	<i>Sebastos</i> Manuel Atzymes	Icon	Paralyzed hand
8	X		25	Wife of Syrstephnos	Icon/icon frame?	Issue of blood
9		X	10	Maria Raoulaina Kasiane	Icon/icon frame?	Salvation of newborn infant
10		X	8	Manuel Bardales	Icon frame	
11		X	12	Irene the <i>archontissa</i>	Epiplon	Headache
12		X	9		Glass lamp	Dropsy
13		X	10		Gilt silver frame for steatite icon	
14		X	25	Nikephoros Apokaukos	Icon/icon frame?	
<i>Category C</i>						
15	X		30	Kallierges	Icon/painting?	Leprosy

four lines, and it is probable (in the case of poem 2, certain) that they were actually inscribed on the work of art.

(1) Εἰς εἰκόνα τῆς Πηγῆς.³⁶

Ζωῆς ἐγὼ βλέπω³⁷ σε πηγὴν, παρθένε,
 Πᾶσαν φλόγα σβεन्नύεις παντὸς κινδύνου.
 Σὺ γὰρ ἀναψύχεις με τοῖς τεραστίοις,
 Ἀφθαρσίας φέρουσα τοῖς κόλποις φλέβα.

On an icon of Pege

I see thee, O Virgin, the Source of Life,
 Thou quenchest every flame of every danger.
 For thou refreshest me with thy miracles,
 Bearing the spring of immortality in thy bosom.

The language of these verses conjures up much the same imagery as Xanthopoulos' description of the mosaic above the sacred spring. Philes addresses the Virgin as the

³⁶Philes, ed. Miller, II, 399, App. no. 36.

³⁷βλέπων in Miller edition; an earlier editor, Wernsdorf, proposed βλέπω.

Source of Life, with the double meaning of the Virgin as the mother of Christ whose birth brought immortality to all mankind, and as the spring whose waters can save lives threatened by disease. Line 4, in which the Virgin is described as “bearing the spring of immortality [i.e., Christ] in thy bosom,” taken together with line 1, is strongly reminiscent of Xanthopoulos’ vivid phrasing: “the life-bearing Source who bubbles forth from her bosom the most beautiful and eternal infant in the likeness of transparent and drinkable water.” The water-life imagery, in which the holy spring water is triumphant over fire, recurs in other poems as well.³⁸

The allusions to the Virgin, Christ Child, spring waters, and miracles suggest that Philes’ epigram describes the fully developed iconography of the Zoodochos Pege, in which the Virgin, with the Christ child before her bosom, sits in a basin from which waters flow into a cistern below, where pilgrims are to be seen drinking and washing themselves with the miraculous water (as can be seen in an eighteenth-century icon in the Byzantine Museum, Athens, Fig. 4). Although the earliest surviving example of such imagery, at the church of St. John at Mistra (Fig. 5), dates from the fourteenth or fifteenth century,³⁹ the epigram suggests that the iconography existed by the early part of the fourteenth century.

(2) Εἰς εἰκόνα τῆς Πηγῆς.⁴⁰

Ἄνω ποταμῶν, κατὰ τὴν παροιμίαν,
Χωροῦσι πηγαί· τοῦτο κἀνταῦθα, ξένε.
Καὶ γὰρ ἐφ’ ὑγρῶν καὶ πολυκρύνων τύπων
Ὁ ζωγράφος δείκνυσι πηγὴν θαυμάτων.

On an icon of Pege

“The sources of rivers flow backwards,” as the proverb says;⁴¹
And this <holds true> here, O stranger.
For the artist depicts a spring of miracles
On top of wet and multispouted images.

The phrase ἄνω ποταμῶν χωροῦσι πηγαί, a verse from a chorus of Euripides’ *Medea* (v. 410), which subsequently became proverbial, means literally “the sources of rivers flow backwards [or upwards].” It is usually translated as “the rivers turn back to their sources” or a variant thereof,⁴² and means that nature has reversed its usual course, as is made clear by the subsequent verse of the *Medea*: “the appointed order of things is reversed.”

³⁸Cf. *Philes*, ed. Miller, I, 67–68, Esc. no. 157; I, 73–74, Esc. no. 163; II, 237, Par. no. 228 [=poems nos. 6, 8, and 12 discussed in this article].

³⁹For fourteenth-century dating, cf. Dufrenne, *Mistra*, 18; for fifteenth century, cf. M. Chatzidakis, *Mistra* (Athens, 1981), 109 and Pallas, *Ζωοδόχος Πηγὴ*, 208 and note 31. N. Teteriatnikov proposes a date of ca. 1360 for the fresco (oral communication).

⁴⁰*Philes*, ed. Martini, p. 147, no. 118.

⁴¹Cf. Greg. Cypr. (Mosqu.) I, 28 and Mantissa Proverbiorum I, 20 (E. Leutsch and F. G. Schneidewin, *Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum*, II [Hildesheim, 1965], 96, 747).

⁴²Cf., e.g., M. Hadas and J. McLean, *Euripides: Ten Plays* (New York, 1960), 41 (“Back to their sources flow the sacred rivers”); P. D. Arnott, *Three Greek Plays for the Theatre* (Bloomington, 1961), 40 (“The sacred rivers flow back to their sources”); E. P. Coleridge in *Seven Famous Greek Plays*, ed. W. J. Oates and E. O’Neill, Jr. (New York, 1938), 304 (“Back to their source the holy rivers turn their tide”); R. C. Trevelyan in *An Anthology of Greek Drama, First Series*, ed. C. A. Robinson, Jr. (San Francisco, 1949), 154 (“Back now to their source will the sacred streams be mounting”).

The proverb is appropriate for the Zoodochos Pege both because of the use of the word πηγή and because the miracles wrought by the spring water are also a reversal of the order of nature. Line 4 of the poem obviously refers to the Virgin as source of miracles, both literally and metaphorically, but the interpretation of line 3 is unclear. D. Pallas, who cited the epigram in his article on the iconography of the Zoodochos Pege, changed τύπων to τόπων with no comment,⁴³ so one cannot be sure if it was a typographical error or a deliberate emendation on his part. The word πολυκρύνων is suggestive of the spouts from which the spring water is seen to pour into the reservoir below in later frescoes and icons of the Zoodochos Pege (cf. Figs. 3–4). Is it possible that Philes has taken the ἄνω of the Euripidean verse/proverb as a preposition governing the genitive, and interprets the verse as meaning “springs flow above rivers”? In this case he might allude to the fact that in the icons of the Zoodochos Pege, the Virgin or Pege is above the waters that stream out of the basin.⁴⁴

The phrase in line 2, τοῦτο κἀνταῦθα, ξένε, clearly indicates that this epigram was inscribed on the icon.

(3) Ἱερομονάχου Γαβριὴλ εἰς τὴν Πηγὴν.⁴⁵

Ζωῆς ὕδωρ βλύζουσα Πηγὴ τῇ κτίσει,
καὶ ποικίλων ἔχουσα θαυμάτων χύσιν,
τῷ Γαβριὴλ πῆγαζε τὴν εὐσπλαγχνίαν,
ὃν καὶ θύτην ἔδειξεν ἡ σὴ χρηστότης.

Of the hieromonk Gabriel on Pege

O Source, gushing forth the water of life for creation,
And containing a stream of various miracles,
Pour forth thy compassion on Gabriel,
Whom thy goodness has revealed also as a priest.

The first two lines of this poem (which was transcribed by Emmanuel Gedeon from an unnamed manuscript) are similar to poem 1 above, with their emphasis on the Virgin as a spring, gushing forth water which is to be understood as Christ, man’s salvation, and as the miraculous waters of healing. Gedeon, in introducing this poem together with five other four-line epigrams, states that the priest Gabriel, who is mentioned in all the poems but one, was an icon-painter (*hagiographos*) who painted images at Pege of all the subjects mentioned in the epigrams, that is, the Zoodochos Pege, the archangel Gabriel, the three hierarchs (Gregory of Nazianzos, Basil of Caesarea, and John Chrysostom), St. Onouphrios, and St. Symeon Stylites. The poems themselves contain no indication that Gabriel was an artist (he could just as well be a donor), nor that any of the images, except of course the Zoodochos Pege, have any connection with the Pege monastery. On the other hand, Gedeon may have had access to information now lost to us; he refers elsewhere, for example, to an unedited poem by Philes on behalf of a *zographos* named Gabriel.⁴⁶ We also know from letters of Michael Gabras that ca. 1322 a *zographos* named

⁴³D. Pallas, Ζωοδόχος Πηγὴ, 207; Nomides made the same tacit change in his Ζωοδόχος Πηγὴ, 216.

⁴⁴This seems to be the interpretation of Pallas, Ζωοδόχος Πηγὴ, 207–8.

⁴⁵Gedeon, Ζωοδόχος Πηγὴ, p. 57, poem A.

⁴⁶Gedeon, “Philes,” 653.

Gabriel was painting icons of the Virgin, but he is addressed as a monk rather than as hieromonk or priest.⁴⁷

(4) Εἰς παναγιάριον λίθινον, ἐν ᾧ ἦν ἡ Θεοτόκος ἡ Πηγὴ.⁴⁸

Ἡ πέτρα τὴν γῆν, ἡ δὲ γῆ φέρει στάχυν·
 Ψυχῶν τροφεύς, ὁ στάχυς, ἡ γῆ, παρθένος·
 Μᾶλλον δὲ πηγὴν ζωτικοῦ ρείθρου βλέπων,
 Ἐκ τῆς πέτρας θήλαζε, πιστέ, τὴν χάριν.

On a stone panagiarion, on which was the Virgin of the Source

The stone bears the earth, the earth bears grain,
 The grain is the nourisher of souls, the earth is the Virgin;
 Or, rather, seeing the spring of life-giving waters,
 O faithful one, suckle grace from the stone.

A *panagiarion* is a small liturgical paten bearing an image of the Virgin, often depicted with outstretched arms as an orant. It was used for the bread which monks offered to the Virgin at mealtime or during the *orthros* service.⁴⁹ Several *panagiaria* made of stone are preserved on Mt. Athos, where one can find examples at Chilandar in jasper (dated to the tenth-eleventh centuries) and bloodstone (eleventh or twelfth century), and at Xeropotamou and Panteleimon in steatite (fourteenth century).⁵⁰

Philes has compressed a great deal into this four-line epigram. In line 1 the πέτρα evidently refers to the stone of the *panagiarion*, which bears an image of the Virgin (“the earth”) who in turn bears the grain, that is, the Christ child, as line 2 explains. Στάχυς can be translated as “scion, progeny” as well as an “ear of wheat,”⁵¹ so that the couplet has a double meaning, that as the earth bears grain which provides the physical nourishment of mankind, so the Virgin holds the Christ child who nourishes the souls of mankind. This comparison is paralleled in another epigram of Philes, this one on a silver *panagiarion*, where he specifically refers to the center of the paten as τὴν γῆν τοῦ Θεοῦ τὴν παρθένον, ἐξ ἧς ὁ καρπὸς ὁ ψυχοτρόφος βρύει (“the earth, the Virgin of God, from whom the soul-nourishing fruit bursts forth”).⁵² In line 3 Philes changes the imagery of the Virgin to that of the life-giving spring, the Virgin being the spring, and the water Christ. The same metaphor of the Virgin as rock gushing forth her Son as water is found in an epigram of John Mauropous, associated by one editor with Pege.⁵³ The final line of the Philes epigram, in which the poet urges the faithful Christian to suckle grace from the rock, is pregnant with meaning, conjuring up images of the monk taking from the stone *panagiarion* the bread full of grace, the Christ child suckling at his mother’s breast, the pilgrim to Pege taking holy water from the spring, and even the water gushing from the

⁴⁷PLP, 3408; *Briefe des Michael Gabras*, ed. Fatouros, II, 420–22, 434–35, epp. 263, 264, 277.

⁴⁸Philes, ed. Miller, II, 157–58, Par. no. 115.

⁴⁹Cf. Symeon of Thessalonike, *De sacra precatone*, cp. 357 (PG 155, cols. 661–664).

⁵⁰For the *panagiaria* at Chilandar, see B. Radojković, *Les objets sculptés d’art mineur en Serbie ancienne* (Belgrade, 1977), 10–12, figs. 6–7; for Xeropotamou and Panteleimon, cf. Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, *Steatite*, nos. 131 and 132 (pls. 64 and 65).

⁵¹For Christ as an ear of wheat, cf. Origen, *hom. 10.3 in Jer.* (PG 13, col. 360D) and Pseudo-John Chrysostom, *In natale Christi*, I (PG 61, col. 737).

⁵²Philes, ed. Miller, II, 157, Par. no. 114.

⁵³PG 120, col. 1175; cf. p. 141, *supra*, and footnote 34.

rock struck by Moses (Exod. 17:6) as a prefiguration of the Virgin's giving birth to Christ and the Virgin as Zoodochos Pege. The latter association is found, for example, in 1 Cor. 10:4, where Paul identifies with Christ the "spiritual rock" of which the Israelites drank.

The title of this epigram suggests (and the text does not contradict the suggestion) that the paten had an image of the Virgin as Zoodochos Pege at the center, with the four verses contained in a circular inscription around the rim.⁵⁴ It is possible that ears of wheat were included as a decorative element, but I have not been able to find any visual parallels.

(5) Εἰς εἰκόνα τῆς Πηγῆς.⁵⁵

Τῶν παρθενικῶν ἀκροώμενος λόγων
Ὁ δεσπότης ἔστηκε σιγῶν ἐνθάδε·
Σὺ δέ, ψυχή, βλέπουσα τὴν εὐστοργίαν,
Τὰς ἐγγύας λάμβανε τῆς σωτηρίας.

On an icon of Pege

The Lord stands silently here,
Listening to the words of the Virgin;
Do thou, my soul, seeing the expression of affection,
Receive the pledges of salvation.

It seems unlikely that this epigram, describing a standing Christ listening to his mother, refers to an icon of the Zoodochos Pege. The epigram may rather have been intended to accompany (note the ἐνθάδε in line 2) a representation of Christ and the Virgin found *at* Pege, most likely a pairing of Christ Antiphonetes and the Virgin Eleousa. In this iconography, which can be seen for example in a twelfth-century fresco at Lagoudera, the Virgin, holding a scroll which may contain supplications, stands to the right of a standing Christ, and is understood to intercede for mankind with her Son.⁵⁶ One should note that a tenth-century account of miracles at Pege alludes to just such a grouping of images of Christ and the Virgin in the Kataphyge, the underground chamber housing the holy spring, although their precise iconography cannot be determined from the text.⁵⁷ In the last two lines of Philes' poem the viewer addresses his own soul, which receives pledges of salvation by seeing the affection between mother and son and thus being assured of the efficacy of the Virgin's intercession.

⁵⁴Even relatively small *panagiaria* could accommodate an amazing amount of text; for example, the (now lost) fourteenth-century *panagiarion* from Chilandar, which had a diameter of only 9 cm (although it had a lobed border, thus increasing the space available for inscriptions), contained a two-line epigram around the inner roundel, a six-line epigram around the outer rim; in addition, each of the twelve prophets is labeled and has a brief text on his scroll (Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, *Steatite*, no. 132, pp. 206–8).

⁵⁵*Philes*, ed. Miller, I, 376, Flor. no. 208.

⁵⁶I am indebted to Henry Maguire for this suggestion. For discussion and illustration of this iconography, see A. Kazhdan and H. Maguire, "Byzantine Hagiographical Texts as Sources on Art," *DOP* 45 (1991), 15–16, figs. 25–26.

⁵⁷*ActaSS*, Nov. III, 885E (τῆς εἰκόνοϛ τῆς Θεομήτοροϛ, τῆς ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ Σωτῆροϛ εἰς τὴν Καταφυγὴν); this is a reference to a wonder-working image of the Virgin which enabled Zoe to conceive Constantine (VII). See also 883E.

(B) EPIGRAMS ON EX-VOTOS

A second group of epigrams by Philes is associated with objects presented to the Theotokos in thanksgiving for miraculous cures, or, less often, in prayer for healing in the future. Three of these poems are identified by the lemma as being addressed to the Zoodochos Pege, while six others may plausibly be connected with miracles at her shrine.

(a) *Epigrams definitely associated with Pege*

(6) Εἰς δεξαμενὴν ὕδατος ἀνατεθεῖσαν τῇ ζωοδόχῳ Πηγῇ παρὰ
Ἰλαρίωνος μοναχοῦ.⁵⁸

- Τῷ τῶν παθῶν καύσωνι τακεῖς ἐκτόπως,
Ὡ ζῶσα πηγὴ τῶν Θεοῦ τεραστίων,
Δεξαμενὴν ὕδατος ὠργάνωσά σοι,
Ὡς ἂν ἐπ' αὐτῇ δεικνυοῦσῃ τὸν πόθον
5 Τὸ ζῶν ὕδωρ πίνοιμι τῆς σωτηρίας,
Φυγὼν τὸ πῦρ ἐκείνο τῆς τιμωρίας.
Ὁ πλούσιος⁵⁹ γὰρ ἐκφοβεῖ με, παρθένε,
Ὅς μάλα διψῶν ἀποτηγανίζεται.
Ἰλαρίων σὸς ταῦτά φησι Κανάβης,
10 Οἰκτρὸς μοναχὸς εὐτελής, εὖνους δ' ὅμως.

On the water reservoir dedicated to the Lifegiving Source by the monk Hilarion

- O living source of the miracles of God,
I, who am consumed extraordinarily by the burning heat of passions,
Have arranged <the construction of> a water reservoir for thee,
So that at this <reservoir> which demonstrates my love
5 I may drink the living water of salvation,
And escape the fire of punishment.
For, O Virgin, I am stricken with fear by the <example of the> rich man
Who suffers greatly from thirst and is broiled <in hellfire>.
Thy <servant> Hilarion Kanabes says these things to thee,
10 A pitiable and worthless monk, but nevertheless well disposed.

The δεξαμενὴ donated by the monk Hilarion Kanabes to the Pege monastery was no ordinary cistern, but the reservoir into which the holy waters of the spring flowed, as indicated by his statement in lines 3–5 that he commissioned the construction of the water reservoir in order to drink the “living water of salvation.” This epigram, then, may well have adorned the stone wall of the reservoir in the underground crypt. It is possible that the reservoir had to be replaced after the accident of 1306 described by Xanthopoulos, when a stone column which supported the staircase leading down to the spring broke under the pressure of a crowd of pilgrims: “Striking the nearby water basin (φιᾶλη),

⁵⁸Philes, ed. Miller, I, 67–68, Esc. no. 157.

⁵⁹Cf. Luke 16:19–24.

it knocked it off its base and cast it to the ground with a great crash, while people more numerous than grains of sand were filling vessels and drawing water from it.”⁶⁰

Hilarion Kanabes, who was probably a monk at the Pege monastery, should perhaps be identified with John Kanabes, who commissioned Philes to write an epigram on a mosaic icon depicting the Twelve Feasts.⁶¹ John would then be his baptismal name, and he would have taken the name Hilarion (which like John begins with the letter iota in Greek) at the time of his monastic vows.

This epigram represents a case in which Hilarion has made a gift to the Zoodochos Pege not in gratitude for physical healing, but in supplication for spiritual healing. The same fire and water imagery, in which the waters of the holy spring quench the fire of passions or pain, is found in poems 1 and 8 (my numbering), while in poem 12 the imagery is reversed and the water of the Pege contains fire which dries up the fluids of dropsy.

(7) Πρὸς τὴν θεομήτορα χαριστήριος.⁶²

- Ὁ σὸς μὲν υἱὸς θαυματουργῶν, παρθένε,
 Καὶ τῇ λογικῇ πρακτικῇ συνεισφέρων,
 Ἄνικμον ἐψύχωσε χειρὸς ὀστέον,
 ῥήματος αὐτῷ ζωτικὴν δοὺς ἰκμάδα·
 5 Καὶ γὰρ ἰατρὸς κοσμοσώστης εὐρέθη,
 Προπατορικῆς ἐκτεμῶν χειρὸς πάθος.
 Σὺ δ', ὦ Μαριὰμ, τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς δρόσε,
 Τῆς σῆς με πηγῆς ταῖς ῥοαῖς ἀναψύχεις,
 Καὶ τὸν πρὶν ἡμίξηρον ἐξ ἁμαρτίας
 10 Χλωροῖς πάλιν, σῶτειρα, κοσμεῖς ὀργάνοις,
 Καὶ τῶν ἰατρῶν τὴν σοφὴν ψῆφον λύεις
 Τῇ πρὸς τὸ λυποῦν μυστικῇ χειρουργίᾳ.
 Ῥάβδος γὰρ ἐν σοὶ γλυκερὸν θάλος φύει,
 Καὶ πῦρ ὑπελθὸν οὐ καταφλέγει βᾶτον,
 15 Καὶ ῥοὺς διαστὰς, ὥς φυγὰς ὑποστρέφει.
 Χειρὶ σε λοιπὸν ζωγραφῷ σκιαγράφου,
 Σμικρὰς ἀμοιβῆς οὐ καταλλήλου χάριν.
 Τείνω δέ σοι τὴν χεῖρα τὴν σεσωσμένην,
 Ὁ χθὲς θανάτων ἄρτι φανεῖς ἀρτίπους·
 20 Ἐμοὶ γὰρ αὐτὴ καὶ ψυχῆς λύσεις πόνους
 Παρειμένης πόρρωθεν ἐκ τῶν πρακτέων,
 Εὐσπλαγχνίας ἄβυσσε καὶ τεραστίων.
 Ὁ σὸς Μανουὴλ ταῦτά φησιν Ἀτζίμης,
 Ὅν καὶ σεβαστὸν τὴν τιμὴν σὺ δεικνύεις.

<A poem of> thanksgiving to the Mother of God

O Virgin, thy Son, working miracles,
 And joining action with word,

⁶⁰ Xanthopoulos, *Logos* 86: καὶ τῇ προκειμένη προσβαλὼν φιάλῃ τοῦ ὕδατος, ἐκείνην μὲν τῆς ἑδρας ἐξίστησι καὶ ῥίπτει κατὰ γῆς μετὰ σφοδροῦ τοῦ ῥοιζήματος, ὑπὲρ ψάμμων ἐκείνη ἐγχεομένων ἀνθρώπων καὶ ἀρυομένων τοῦ νάματος.

⁶¹ *Philes*, ed. Miller, I, 9–10, Esc. no. 24. This suggestion is made by *PLP*, 10857.

⁶² *Philes*, ed. Miller, I, 66–67, Esc. no. 156; the lemma in Par. gr. 2876, fol. 262r, reads “On behalf of Kyr Manuel Atzymes, the *pansebastos*, to the Mother of God, the Source.”

- Restored life to the dry bone of a hand (cf. Matt. 12:9–14, Mark 3:1–6, Luke 6:6–11),
 Giving it the living moisture of his word.
- 5 For he has been revealed as a world-saving doctor,
 Excising the affliction of the hand of our forefather (Gen. 3:23).
 But thou, O Mary, dew of my soul,
 Dost refresh me with the streams of thy spring,
 And, O Mistress of Salvation, thou adornest again with fresh limbs
- 10 One who was formerly half-withered because of his sins,
 And thou repealest the “wise” judgment of the doctors
 With thy mystical surgery on the painful <area>.
 For in thee the rod brings forth a sweet shoot (Num. 17:9),
 And descending fire does not burn the bush (Exod. 3:1–6),
- 15 And the waters divide, and turn back like a fugitive (Exod. 14:15–30).
 Therefore I paint thee with the hand of an icon-painter,
 As an unsuitably small repayment.
 And I extend to thee the hand which thou hast saved,
 I, who only yesterday was on the point of death, but now am revealed sound of limb;
- 20 For thou shalt also relieve the suffering of my soul,
 Which has for long been paralyzed on account of its deeds,
 O bottomless source of compassion and miracles.
 Thy <servant> Manuel Atzymes says these words,
 Whom thou revealest with the dignity of *sebastos*.

The association of this poem with the Pege shrine seems certain, on account of the lemma in the Paris manuscript and the placement of the epigram in the Escorial manuscript immediately before the poem on the water reservoir given to Pege by Hilarion Kanabes (poem 6 above). The imagery of the Virgin as dew in line 7 and “the streams of her spring” in line 8 are also evocative of other epigrams safely attributed to Pege. The epigram was commissioned by a certain Manuel Atzymes, the *sebastos*, who is known only from these verses.⁶³ The title *sebastos* seems here to be a simple dignity.⁶⁴ Several other members of the Atzymes family (Euphrosyne, Basil, George, Daniel, Theodore, and Michael) also patronized Philes or were the subject of his verses.⁶⁵

The first twelve lines of the poem set up a comparison between Christ’s healing of the man with the withered hand, and the Virgin’s miraculous cure of Atzymes’ paralyzed hand. Philes enforces his comparison and contrast of the two miracles by subtle plays on words. Thus in line 3 Christ “restored life” (ἐψύχωσε, with double meaning of “give soul to” and “make cold”) to the “dry” hand bone, while in line 8 Mary “dost refresh” (lit., “cool”) Atzymes with the waters from her spring. Christ healed with “the living moisture of word,” that is, with his words alone (line 4), while the Virgin healed “with the streams of her spring” (line 8); Philes emphasizes the way in which the moisture of the words of Christ or the spring of the Virgin healed the “dried up” hand of the paralytic, and may have intended as well to play on the similarity between ῥήματος (cf. ῥεύματος) and ῥοαῖς. Finally, while Christ is a physician (ιατρός of line 5) who himself performs surgery (ἐκτεμών of line 6), the Virgin refutes the judgments of physicians (τῶν ιατρῶν of line 11)

⁶³PLP 1632.

⁶⁴Cf. L. Stiernon, “Notes de titulature et de prosopographie byzantines: Sébaste et gambros,” *REB* 23 (1965), 226–32.

⁶⁵PLP, 1625–1628, 1630, 1633.

and performs “mystical surgery” (τῇ . . . μυστικῇ χειρουργίᾳ of line 12) on her patient. Line 6, in which Christ “excises the affliction of the hand of our forefather,” refers to the way in which his mission of salvation redeemed man from the handicap of Adam who was punished with the inability to “stretch forth his hand” and partake of the Tree of Life.

Lines 13–15 allude to various Old Testament prefigurations of the Virgin, the rod of Aaron,⁶⁶ the Burning Bush, and the Crossing of the Red Sea. The first prefiguration of the rod of Aaron, the dry stick which grew a fresh shoot, is an appropriate metaphor for a paralyzed arm or hand that regained its mobility (cf. line 9). The third prefiguration, the Crossing of the Red Sea, may derive from a *theotokion* that compares the Israelites crossing the waters without getting wet and the Red Sea’s return to its original condition with Mary’s preservation of her virginity while giving birth to Christ.⁶⁷

Lines 16–19 refer to Atzymes’ commissioning of an icon as a gift to the Virgin in thanksgiving for the cure of his hand. In typical Byzantine parlance, when he says “I paint thee with the hand of an icon-painter,” he means “I have asked an artist to paint thy icon,” not that he has painted the icon himself.⁶⁸ I interpret lines 18–19 as meaning that Atzymes had included in the icon an image of himself (i.e., a donor portrait, probably of much smaller scale than the Virgin), depicted as holding out his hand which is now free of paralysis. The phrase τείνω . . . τὴν χεῖρα also has a double allusion, to the story of Christ’s healing of the man with the withered hand, where he says ἔκτεινόν σου τὴν χεῖρα (Matt. 12:13), and to the verse from Genesis (3:23) referred to in line 6, in which God forbids Adam to extend his hand and eat of the forbidden fruit. In lines 20–23, Atzymes prays to the Virgin to relieve the suffering of the soul, as she has healed his body, a sentiment we have seen in several other poems of Philes.⁶⁹

(8) Χαριστήριος τῇ θεοτόκῳ ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ Συρστέφνου γυναικός.⁷⁰

Μόνη γυναικῶν τὸν θεὸν φέρεις βρέφος·
Μόνη γυναικῶν παρθελεύεις ἐν τόκῳ·
Μόνη γυναικῶν τὸ βροτῶν σώζεις γένος·
Τῆς φύσεως γὰρ ἐξαμείβεις τοὺς νόμους,⁷¹

- 5 Καὶ τήνδε τὴν γυναῖκα φανοῦσαν τέως
Τῷ πᾶσαν αὐτῆς ἐκκενωθῆναι φλέβα,
Μόνη γυναικῶν ἐξανιστάνεις πάλιν,
Καὶ τῶν ἱατρῶν ἐξελέγγχεις τὴν κρίσιν.
Ἦν γὰρ ὑπεξίκμασεν ἡ νόσος φύσιν,
10 Τῇ σὴ δρόσῳ θάλλουσαν αὐτὴ δεικνύεις.

⁶⁶For discussion of the rod of Aaron as a prefiguration of the Virgin and the analogous story of the flowering of Joseph’s rod in the Gospel of the Nativity of Mary, see Underwood, *Kariye Djami*, I, 78–80.

⁶⁷Ὁκτώηχος τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἰωάννου τοῦ Δαμασκηνοῦ, ed. I. K. Papachrones (Katerine, 1988), 237. Cf. also homily 23 of Proklos of Constantinople, *De dogmate incarnationis*, ed. C. Martin, in *Le Muséon* 54 (1941), 48.19, where he compares θάλασσα διαβάσει σχιζομένη το παρθενία μετὰ τόκον μὴ φθειρομένη. I am indebted to Nicholas Constanas for both of these references.

⁶⁸Cf., for example, τὸ φωταγωγὸν σκευὸς ὥργάνωσα σοι in Par. no. 228.2 (*Philes*, ed. Miller, II, 237); δεξαμενὴν ὕδατος ὥργάνωσά σοι in poem 6, line 3 above.

⁶⁹Cf., for example, poems 8 (lines 24–25), 11 (line 11), and 15 (lines 27–30), in this article.

⁷⁰*Philes*, ed. Miller, I, 73–74, Esc. no. 163. A lemma in the Paris manuscript adds the information that the poem is addressed to the Theotokos tes Peges (<ἐκ προσώπου> τῆς <τοῦ Συρστέφνου γυναικός> πρὸς τὴν Θεοτόκον τὴν Πηγὴν, τοῦ τῆς αἱμορροΐας πάθους ἀπαλλαγείσης).

⁷¹For parallels to this description of the role of the Virgin, see *Philes*, ed. Martini, p. 32 (no. 21.7) and p. 85 (no. 44.86): ἐξαμείβεις τὰς φύσεις.

- Θεὸς μὲν οὖν ἔπληξε τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους,
 Μεταβαλὼν εἰς αἷμα πᾶν ὕδωρ πάλαι·
 Τῆς σῆς δὲ πηγῆς, Μαριὰμ, τὸ ζῶν ὕδωρ
 Αἵματος ἰσχὺν προσβαλὼν τῷ λειψάνῳ
 15 Σωτηρίαν ἤνεγκεν ἐξ ἀντιστρόφου.
 Καὶ γὰρ καθαιρεῖ τὰς νομὰς τῶν τραυμάτων,
 Καὶ τῶν ὀδυνῶν τὴν πυρὰν καταψύχει,
 Κἂν ὕδεριᾷ δυσπαθῶς τὸ σαρκίον,
 Τὸ τοῦ πάθους οἶδημα συστέλλει ζέον·
 20 Κἂν ἰσχὺν εὖρη σῶμα καὶ μόλις πνέον,
 Εἰς θρύψιν αὐτὸ καὶ χλιδὴν εὐχρουν τρέπει.
 Τοιαῦτά σοι τὰ δῶρα, σεμνὴ παρθένε,
 Πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα τήνδε τὴν σὴν ἰκέτιν,
 Ἦν καὶ ψυχικῆς ἐξαναστήσας νόσου,
 25 Τὸ ζῶν ὕδωρ χέασα τῆς ἀφθαρσίας.

<A poem of> thanksgiving to the Mother of God on behalf of the wife of Syrstephnos

- Thou alone amongst women dost bear God as an infant,
 Thou alone amongst women dost remain a virgin while giving birth,
 Thou alone amongst women dost save the race of mortals;
 For thou dost alter the laws of nature,
 5 And this woman who was for a time on the verge of death
 As a result of the emptying out of all her veins,
 Thou alone amongst women dost revive her once more,
 And dost refute the judgment of doctors.
 For the nature which the disease desiccated
 10 Thou dost show to be flourishing as a result of thy dew.
 God smote the Egyptians,
 Changing all the water into blood long ago (Exod. 7:17–24);
 But Mary, the living water (John 4:10) of thy spring,
 Offering the strength of blood to her lifeless body,
 15 Hath conversely brought salvation.
 For it relieves⁷² the infection of wounds,
 And cools the burning fire of pain;
 Even if the flesh suffers terribly from dropsy,
 It checks the seething swelling of the disease.
 20 And if it finds a withered body that is scarcely breathing,
 It turns it to softness and luxuriant health.⁷³
 Such are thy gifts, holy Virgin,
 To this woman thy suppliant;
 Mayest thou revive her from spiritual illness as well,
 25 Pouring <over her> the living water of immortality.

Since the text of the epigram nowhere mentions the name of Syrstephnos, the title including this information must have been added at the time of composition. The connection with Pege may have also been contained in an original lemma, or may have been added later, based on line 13 where Philes speaks of τῆς σῆς δὲ πηγῆς, Μαριὰμ, τὸ ζῶν ὕδωρ.

⁷²Or lege καθαίρει, “purifies”?

⁷³Although the words θρύψις and χλιδὴ both often have negative connotations of “weakness, debauchery” and “luxury, effeminacy,” respectively, Philes here seems to be using them with positive connotations of blooming health. Thus, I have adopted the translation of “softness” for θρύψις and “luxuriance” for χλιδὴ.

Syrstephnos was probably an Italian or person of Italian extraction (Syr Stefano), whose name was hellenized.⁷⁴ Although the verses do not specifically mention a painting, the poem may be addressed to an icon of the Virgin that also included a picture of the wife of Syrstephnos who had been healed from an issue of blood. The telltale words suggesting the incorporation of an image of the woman are τὴνδε τὴν γυναῖκα (line 5) and δεικνύεις (line 10). She may have been depicted with a small donor portrait in one corner or to one side, or the actual healing at the spring may have been represented.⁷⁵ Perhaps Syrstephnos (or possibly his wife) commissioned this epigram to accompany an icon of the Zoodochos Pege in thanksgiving for her miraculous cure.

The poem is carefully crafted to play on the theme of water and blood. Lines 1–4 emphasize the miraculous character of the Theotokos, who has contravened the laws of nature with her virgin birth of Christ and has reversed the sinful action of Eve by bringing salvation to mankind. Mary has refuted the judgment of doctors by restoring to life a woman who was dying of hemorrhage, by restoring the fluids to her body with her “dew,” that is, the waters of Pege. In the Old Testament, God turned river water to blood as a punishment of the Egyptians (the first of the ten plagues), but as a result of the new dispensation Mary has transformed her spring water into blood for a healing purpose, to refill the woman’s veins. In lines 16–21, Philes engages in generic praise of the waters of the Virgin’s spring which alleviate infection, pain, and diseases such as dropsy. He then concludes with a prayer that the wife of Syrstephnos be healed of her spiritual illness as well. The final line, “Pouring the living water of immortality,” is paralleled in other poems of Philes on Pege.⁷⁶

It is conceivable that an epigram of twenty-five lines, such as this, could have been inscribed on an icon frame; the revetment of the fourteenth-century Vatopedi Hodegetria icon, for example, incorporates a twelve-line epigram in two plaques in the bottom part of the frame, and could easily have been designed to accommodate more verses.⁷⁷

(b) *Epigrams probably associated with the Pege shrine*

(9) Ἐκ προσώπου τῆς Παουλαίνης τῆς Κασσιανῆς, εἰς εἰκόνα τῆς Θεομήτορος.⁷⁸

Τοὺς ἐντόνους⁷⁹ λύσσασα τῆς Εὐας πόνους,
 Καὶ συμπαθῶς τηροῦσα τοὺς ἐμοὺς τόκους,
 (Θεὸς γὰρ ἐκ σοῦ πλὴν φυσικῶν ὠδίνων),
 Δέχου τὸ σῶστρον τοῦτο, σεμνὴ παρθένε,
 5 Δι’ ἧς ἔχω ζῶν καὶ παρ’ ἐλπίδα πνέον
 Τὸ παραμικρὸν ἀποθάνον μοι βρέφος.
 Ζωὴ γὰρ εἶ σὺ καὶ τεραστίων χύσις

Cf. *Philes*, ed. Martini, no. 76.14 (φυτουργὲ τῆς χλιδῆς τῶν ἀνθέων) and no. 79.16 (ὅταν τῆς ἄνθος ἡ χλιδὴ τῇ παρακμῇ νοσῇ), where there is clearly an association between χλιδή and blooming flowers at their prime.

⁷⁴*PLP*, 27230, suggests that perhaps the name should be corrected to Συρστέφανος. For parallel hellenized Italian names, cf. Συργιάννης, Συμπέρος, and Συρτομάσης (*PLP*, 27167, 27229, and 27231).

⁷⁵If the second interpretation is correct, then this poem could also be assigned to category C.

⁷⁶Cf., for example, poem 1, line 4, and poem 14, line 4.

⁷⁷Cf. A. Grabar, *Les revêtements en or et en argent des icônes byzantines du moyen âge* (Venice 1975), cat. 21 and fig. 47.

⁷⁸*Philes*, ed. Miller, I, 72–73, Esc. no. 161.

⁷⁹The manuscript reads ἐντόμους, for which Miller (I, 72 note 4) suggests the correction ἐντόνους.

- Τὴν ἰλὺν ἐκπλύνουσα τῆς ἁμαρτίας,
 Κομνηνοφύης ἐκ 'Ραοὺλ σοι Μαρία
 10 Κασιανὴ προσεῖπεν ὡς εὖνους τάδε.

On behalf of Kasiane Raoulaina, to an icon of the Mother of God

- O thou who delivered Eve from her intense suffering⁸⁰
 And dost sympathetically watch over my birth pangs⁸¹
 (For God <was born> of thee without the natural pain of childbirth),
 Accept this thank-offering, holy Virgin,
 5 Thou, through whom my infant child who all but died
 Lives and breathes beyond <all> hope.
 For thou art life and the source of miracles,
 Washing away the mud of sin.
 Maria Kasiane, the daughter of Raoul, of the lineage of the Komnenoi,
 10 Has spoken these words to thee in gratitude.

An association with the Pege shrine is suggested by the placement of the epigram in the Escorial manuscript just before poem 8 above (which is definitely connected with Pege) and poem 10 below (most probably to be attributed to Pege). Also indicative are lines 7–8, in which Philes refers to the Virgin as a *τεραστίων χύσις*⁸² who washes away sins and brings miraculous healing. The first three lines extol the Virgin for helping women through the painful labor of childbirth to which they have been condemned because of Eve's original sin (Gen. 3:16). The *τόκοι* in line 2 has the double meaning of both childbirth and children; the Virgin protects the mother as she gives birth, and then protects the children once they are born. Maria Kasiane Raoulaina, who is known only from this poem,⁸³ offers the Virgin a gift in thanksgiving for the miraculous recovery of her baby who almost died (perhaps in the course of its delivery). In other poems of Philes the *σῶστρον* is linked with *χρυσάργυρος* and probably refers to an icon revetment; here, too, it may mean a revetment or it could be the icon itself.

- (10) Εἰς τὴν ὑπέραγνον Θεοτόκον.⁸⁴
 Ὑδωρ μὲν εἰ πίνοιμι, λαμβάνω κόρον.⁸⁵
 Τῆς φύσεως γὰρ συγγενὲς πάθος τόδε·
 Τῶν σῶν δὲ καλῶν ἐμφορούμενος χύδην,
 Ὡς ἀπὸ πηγῆς ἐκρεούσης ἀφθόνως,
 5 Οὐ λαμβάνω, πάναγνε Μαριάμ, κόρον.
 Οὐκοῦν δέχου τὸ σῶστρον ἐκ χρυσαργύρου,
 Καὶ τὴν χύσιν πῆγαζε τῶν τεραστίων.
 Φησὶ Μανουὴλ Βαρδαλῆς τῇ παρθένῳ.

⁸⁰Another possible translation for this line is "Thou who didst deliver <us, that is, women> from the intense suffering of Eve."

⁸¹The phrase *τοὺς ἐμοὺς τόκους* could also mean "my children," but probably means "birth pangs" in view of the following verse.

⁸²A phrase paralleled in poem 10, line 7.

⁸³*PLP*, 24143; cf. also S. Fassoulakis, *The Byzantine Family of Raoul-Ral(l)es* (Athens, 1973), 38–39, no. 23.

⁸⁴*Philes*, ed. Miller, I, 73, Esc. no. 162.

⁸⁵The manuscript reads *κόρην*, but *κόρον* is a better reading, as Miller himself suggested (I, 73 note 3); cf. also *κόρον* in line 5 of this poem.

To the all-pure Mother of God

- If I drink water, I am satiated,
 For this is a natural experience.
 But even though I am filled bountifully with thy blessings,
 As if from an abundantly flowing spring,
 5 I am not satiated, all holy Mary.
 Therefore accept this thank-offering of gold and silver,
 And gush forth a stream of miracles.
 So says Manuel Bardales to the Virgin.

Again, there is no reference to the Zoodochos Pege in the lemma for this epigram, but it is placed in the Escorial manuscript just before the epigram for the wife of Syrstephnos (Escorial no. 163, poem 8 above), which is surely connected with Pege; moreover, its language is strongly evocative of the spring of healing water at Pege. The poem is based on the theme of drinking water, and uses the telltale words *πηγή* and *πηγάζω* in lines 4 and 7. The expression *χύσιν τῶν τεραστίων* (line 7) is found in other poems probably related to Pege, and *χύσις* and *τεράστια* are used separately in epigrams definitely addressed to the Zoodochos Pege. The *σῶστρον ἐκ χρυσαργύρου* of line 6 is probably a gilt silver icon revetment, similar to the *θυγγίον* of the epigram on the steatite icon (poem 13, below). This hypothesis is supported by similarities in the terminology of the inscriptions on the Freising and Vatopedi icons of the Virgin.⁸⁶ The term *σῶστρον* was used in antiquity of a thank-offering to the god Asklepios in gratitude for healing; here it no doubt refers to an ex-voto offering to the Virgin. Manuel Bardales, the donor, is known only from this poem; other members of his family also commissioned or received poems from Philes.⁸⁷ It is quite likely that this eight-line epigram was actually engraved on the revetment; the revetments for the Freising and Vatopedi icons contain fourteen- and twelve-line poems respectively. I might also suggest that the final line, "So says Manuel Bardales to the Virgin," may indicate that a small donor portrait of Bardales was included in a lower corner of the revetment; he might have been depicted looking up at the larger image of the Virgin as if he were actually speaking to her.⁸⁸

(11) Ἐπίγραμμα εἰς ἔπιπλον τῇ Θεομήτορι.⁸⁹

Τὸ τῆς κεφαλῆς τῆς ἐμῆς ἄλγος, κόρη,
 Τοῖς τῶν ἱατρῶν ἀντιπίπτον φαρμάκοις
 Ἦ σὴ καθαιρεῖ κοσμοσώτειρα δρόσος·
 Τοῦ θαύματος δὲ προγράφεις μοι τὸν τύπον

⁸⁶The inscription on the thirteenth-century gilt revetment of the Freising icon twice refers to *ἄργυρος* and *χρυσός*, while the frame on the Vatopedi icon of the Hodegetria contains the verses *ἀλλὰ τὸν ἀγνὸν τῆς Θεοῦ νύμφης τύπον* . . . ἔρωτι κοσμήσασα ἐκ χρυσαργύρου. Cf. Grabar, *Revêtements*, cat. 16 and 21. Cf. the remarks of N. P. Ševčenko, "Vita Icons and 'Decorated' Icons of the Comnenian Period," in *Four Icons in the Menil Collection*, ed. B. Davezac (Austin, Texas, 1992), 65–67. For further discussion of the term *χρυσάργυρος*, see footnote 110, *infra*.

⁸⁷For Manuel Bardales, see *PLP*, 2184. *PLP* connects two poems of Philes (ed. Miller, II, 150 and ed. Martini, p. 42) with John Bardales, the *sebastos* (*PLP*, 2182). Leo Bardales is included by Gedeon in his list of addressees and commissioners of unpublished poems by Philes; cf. Gedeon, "Philes," 654.

⁸⁸Cf., for example, the icon of the Virgin in the Tretyakov Museum in Moscow whose revetment bears portraits of the donors Constantine Akropolites and his wife Maria Akropolitissa, but no epigram (Grabar, *Revêtements*, cat. 18).

⁸⁹*Philes*, ed. Miller, II, 233, Par. no. 220.

- 5 Ὁφθεῖσα νυκτὸς καὶ καταστράψασά με.
 Χριστὸς γὰρ αὐτὸς, ἡ κεφαλὴ τῶν ὅλων,
 Ἀνεῖλεν ἐν σοὶ τὰς σκιὰς καὶ τὰς νόσους.
 Ἀμείβομαι γοῦν τὴν κορυφαίαν χάριν
 Τῷ νῦν ὑφαντῷ τῆς γραφῆς σου κρασπέδῳ·
 10 Καὶ σὺ πάλιν δρόσιζε τῇ σῇ με σκέπῃ,
 Καὶ παραμυθοῦ τῆς ψυχῆς μου τοὺς πόνους.
 Ὡς ἐξ Εἰρήνης ταῦτα τῆς ἀρχοντίσεως.

Epigram on an epiplon for the Virgin

- Thy world-saving dew relieves,
 O maiden, the pain in my head,
 Which resisted the drugs of physicians.
 Appearing in a vision at night and bedazzling me,
 5 Thou didst prefigure the representation of the miracle.
 For Christ himself, the head of all,
 Through thee has eliminated shadows and diseases.
 Therefore I repay now thy crowning grace
 With a woven fabric of thy picture.
 10 Besprinkle me again with thy protection,
 And comfort the anguish of my soul.
 These words are as if by Irene the *archontissa*.

The evidence for associating this epigram with the Zoodochos Pege is the allusion to the “miraculous dew” of the Virgin, which is elsewhere a metaphor for the healing waters of her spring at Pege (see also poem 8 above, line 10, and poem 12 below, line 5). The epithet κοσμοσώτειρα in line 3 suggests another possibility, however, that the epigram was addressed to the Virgin Kosmosoteira, to whom the monastery and church at Pherrai in Thrace were dedicated.⁹⁰

Philes wrote this epigram on behalf of Irene the *archontissa* (known only from this poem),⁹¹ who has presented to the Virgin an *epiplon* bearing her image in thanksgiving for relief from a headache. The term *epiplon* can refer to a liturgical cloth, sometimes a hanging over an icon, and is apparently used interchangeably with παραπέτασμα, καταπέτασμα, πέπλος, and ἐγγχείριον, among other terms.⁹² In the testament of Michael Attaleiates, for example, the word is used to indicate a ποδέα, a cloth that hung from the lower edge of an icon.⁹³ A parallel for the donation of a liturgical cloth to Pege in thanksgiving for a miraculous cure is found in the poem written by Manganeios Prodromos on behalf of Irene the *sebastokratorissa*, who gave a *peplos* to Pege when the Virgin saved the life of her son who had suffered a serious eye injury.⁹⁴ I have been unable to find any extant examples of a liturgical cloth bearing such an image of the Virgin, but line 9 of the poem seems to indicate that this is what Philes had in mind. A literary parallel which supports

⁹⁰The Kosmosoteira monastery, founded in the twelfth century, was still functioning in the fourteenth century; cf. S. Sinos, *Die Klosterkirche der Kosmosoteira in Bera (Vira)* (Munich, 1985), 20–27, and A.-M. Talbot, *The Correspondence of Athanasius I, Patriarch of Constantinople* (Washington, D.C., 1975), ep. 16.16, pp. 40, 322.

⁹¹*PLP*, 5968.

⁹²Cf. V. Nunn, “The Encheirion as Adjunct to the Icon in the Middle Byzantine Period,” *BMGS* 10 (1986), 74, 80.

⁹³P. Gautier, “La diataxis de Michel Attaliate,” *REB* 39 (1981), 99.1308–1313.

⁹⁴Cf. footnote 35, *supra*.

such an interpretation is found in an epigram on a *peplos* in the Marcianus codex 524, where the poet writes: “O Virgin, whom I delineate with gold and purple . . . For an image of the image is a delightful gift.”⁹⁵

Much of the poem resembles a typical miracle account. We learn that Irene suffered from a severe headache that resisted any medicine offered by physicians, and that during the night she had a vision of the Virgin as a premonition of her healing. As so often it is Christ who is given credit for the miraculous cure, acting through his agent, in this case the Virgin. Philes delights in using puns alluding to Irene’s painful head: Christ is described as “the head (κεφαλή) of all” (line 6), and Irene repays the Virgin’s “crowning (κορυφαίαν) grace” (line 8). In lines 10–11 Irene entreats the Virgin to heal her spiritual suffering in the same way that she has cured her physical ailment.⁹⁶

The lemma of the epigram, ἐπίγραμμα εἰς ἐπιπλον τῇ Θεομήτορι, “epigram on an *epiplon* for the Mother of God,” is ambiguous; it is unclear whether the epigram was actually woven or embroidered into the fabric or merely accompanied the gift. Extant textiles, such as the *aër* in Halberstadt, demonstrate that inscriptions of considerable length were in fact incorporated into liturgical cloths.⁹⁷ There is also literary evidence showing that in the Palaiologan period a liturgical cloth donated as an ex-voto might bear an epigram describing the miraculous cure. For we read in the *Miracula* of Kosmas and Damianos that Constantine Akropolites, after the healing of his young daughter Theodora at the Kosmidion, presented such a *peplos* to the shrine: “Therefore, as an act of compensation on behalf of his daughter, the father came bringing to the saints [Kosmas and Damianos] as a ransom a *peplos* woven of gold and silk, bearing the images of the saints and of his daughter. And he had an iambic inscription made all around the *peplos*, which even after his (or her?) death bears witness to the miracle, and prompts those who have physical ailments to seek refuge with the saints.”⁹⁸

(12) Εἰς κανδήλαν τῇ Θεομήτορι.⁹⁹

Ζωὴν τε καὶ φῶς εὐτυχούσα,¹⁰⁰ παρθένε,
Τὸ φωταγωγὸν σκεῦος ὠργάνωσά σοι·
Δεινῷ γὰρ ὑδέρου με ληφθεῖσαν πάθει
Κατὰ φύσιν εὖρωστον εἰργάσω πάλιν·

5 Ἐξίкмσας δὲ τοὺς χυμοὺς τῶν ἐγκάτων

⁹⁵Nunn, “Encheirion,” 99–100.

⁹⁶This is a commonplace in Philes, found, for example, in poem 8 above.

⁹⁷P. Johnstone, *The Byzantine Tradition in Church Embroidery* (London, 1967), 114–15, pl. 85–86. Each *aër* contains ten dodecasyllable verses; cf. F. Dölger, “Die zwei byzantinischen ‘Fahnen’ im Halberstädter Domschatz,” in *Geisteswelt des Mittelalters. Studien und Texte. Martin Grabmann zur Vollendung des 60. Lebensjahres von Freunden und Schülern gewidmet* [Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters, Supplement Band 3, vol. 2] (Münster, 1935), 1355–57.

⁹⁸The passage is found in *mir.* 40 of the sixth series of *miracula*, written by the deacon Maximos; cf. L. Deubner, *Kosmas und Damian* (Leipzig-Berlin, 1907), 199: κἀντεῦθεν ἀντιφιλοτιμούμενος ὑπὲρ τῆς θυγατρὸς ὁ πατὴρ πέπλον τινὰ χρυσοῦ καὶ Σηρῶν ναμάτων ἐξυφασμένον τοὺς τε τύπους παρ’ ἑαυτῶ τῶν ἁγίων καὶ δὴ καὶ τῆς θυγατρὸς ἱστοργῶ ἐξεικονισθέντες φέροντα τέχνη πρόσεισιν ἄγων ἀντίλυτρον τοῖς ἁγίοις· ἐν κύκλῳ δὲ καὶ ἱάμβους ἐγχαραξάς τῳ πέπλῳ καὶ μετὰ θάνατον τῳ θαύματι μαρτυρεῖ καὶ προτροπὴ τοῖς κακῶς τὸ σῶμα διακειμένοις τῆς ἐπὶ τοὺς ἁγίους καταφυγῆς γίγνεται. Theodora’s illness can be dated perhaps to the 1280s, since she is known to have married in 1295; cf. *PLP* 7295.

⁹⁹*Philes*, ed. Miller, II, 237, Par. no. 228.

¹⁰⁰Emendation suggested by Nicolas Oikonomides; the Miller text reads εὐτυχῶν σε, but a feminine form of the participle is needed to match ληφθεῖσαν in line 3.

Τῆς σῆς δρόσου μάλιστα ταῖς ἐπομβρίαις·
 Ἀπόκρυφον γὰρ πῦρ ἀναλίσκον φέρεις.
 Οὐκοῦν δέχου φῶς ἐν διαυγεῖ λυχνίᾳ,
 Μὴ πως κρυβῇ τοσοῦτον ἀνθρώποις τέρας.

On a lamp for the Mother of God

Attaining light and life, O Virgin,
 I have contrived for thee a light-bearing vessel.
 For thou didst restore me again to good health
 When I was afflicted with the dread disease of dropsy.
 5 For through the showers of thy dew
 Thou didst dry out the fluids of my inner organs.
 For thou bearest a secret fire which consumes <moisture>.
 Therefore accept <this> light in a transparent lamp,
 So that such a miracle may not be hidden to mankind.

The attribution of this epigram to the Zoodochos Pege¹⁰¹ is suggested by three factors. First of all, the image of the Virgin as “dew” (line 5) is a metaphor found also in poems 7, 8, and 11 above. Second, the grateful donor who commissioned the epigram was afflicted with dropsy, a disease for which the waters of Pege seemed particularly efficacious; Xanthopoulos wrote of two individuals suffering from dropsy who were healed by drinking the spring water,¹⁰² and John Gabras sought healing at Pege for his dropsical symptoms.¹⁰³ Third, the theme of the “reversal of nature,” in this case the way in which the “dew” of the Virgin (i.e., the water of Pege) unexpectedly dries up the excess fluid of the dropsy, is found frequently in accounts of miracles at Pege; normally drinking water only aggravates the symptoms of dropsy, but the holy water of Pege acts like fire and evaporates the fluid.¹⁰⁴ The poet’s description of the Virgin (and her spring water) as fire which consumes moisture is of course particularly appropriate for an inscription on a lamp in which the burning wick consumes oil (which may have been floating on water).

The female donor, who is unnamed, offers the Virgin a glass lamp in thanksgiving for her healing. Since no glass lamps survive from the Palaiologan period, the Philes epigram provides important evidence that glass lamps were being produced in Byzantium in the fourteenth century.¹⁰⁵ One can only guess at their shape and decoration. The closest parallels are the glass mosque lamps produced in Syria and Egypt about the same time by Mamluk craftsmen, with inscriptions and other decorative elements painted in

¹⁰¹ An epigram of Philes on a silver lamp dedicated to the Virgin (*Philes*, ed. Miller, I, 117, Esc. 222) could perhaps also be linked with Pege, because in line 4 the donor refers to the Mother of God as a πηγὴν . . . φωτός, “a source of fire.” I have decided not to include the poem in this selection, however, because there is no other imagery of water.

¹⁰² Xanthopoulos, *Logos*, pp. 73–76, 78–82 (*mir.* 55 and 57).

¹⁰³ *Briefe des Michael Gabras*, ed. Fatouros, II, ep. 457, pp. 699–705; cf. also line 18 of poem 8 above.

¹⁰⁴ In the case of John Rodelphos the Varangian, Xanthopoulos states that when he drank water, the fluid made his body swell even more; but after drinking water at Pege, he excreted vast quantities of urine and was healed (Xanthopoulos, *Logos*, 78, 81).

¹⁰⁵ Other evidence for such lamps in the Palaiologan period is found in Clavijo’s account of his visit in 1403 to the Stoudios monastery, where he saw “many lamps of silver and of glass”; cf. C. R. Markham, *Narrative of the Embassy of Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo to the Court of Timour at Samarkand* (London, 1859; repr. New York, 1970), 30.

enamel.¹⁰⁶ It seems reasonable to posit that Philes' eight-line epigram was painted on the lamp, in gilt or enamel.

(13) Εἰς ἀμίαντον εἰκόνα τῆς Θεομήτορος.¹⁰⁷

- Ἄφλεκτος ὑπάρξασα πυρφόρος βάτος
Ἄμεμπτος εἰς ἄχραντον ἐξέσθης λίθον·
Πρὸς γὰρ τὸ πῦρ σίδηρος, οὐ λίθος, μένει·
Κατάσκιον δὲ πάλιν εὐρέθης ὄρος
5 Τῷ συνδετικῷ τῶν διεστώτων λίθῳ.
Ἐγὼ δὲ πηγὴν εὐτυχῶν τεραστίων
Τῷ τοῦ χρυσαργύρου σε κοσμῶ θριγγίῳ.
Ναὶ κῆπε Χριστοῦ, ναὶ θεόδροσον φρέαρ,
Τοὺς σοὺς ἀγωγοὺς δαυιλῶς ἀναστόμου·
10 Τῆς πίστεως γὰρ τὴν χρυσὴν κάλπιν φέρω.

On a steatite icon of the Mother of God

- Thou who wast a burning bush unconsumed by fire
In thy perfection hast been sculpted on an unblemished stone.
For in contact with fire iron remains, but stone <does> not.¹⁰⁸
Thou hast been found again to be a shady mountain
5 Through the stone that binds together those that are separate.
But I, having attained a spring of miracles,
Adorn thee with a frame of gilt silver.
Verily, O garden of Christ, verily, O well that is bedewed by God,
Open up thy channels abundantly;
10 For I bear the golden ewer of faith.

The imagery of this poem on a steatite icon of the Virgin suggests that it may refer to the Zoodochos Pege, even though there is no such explicit indication in the title. Such phrases as πηγὴν . . . τεραστίων (line 6), θεόδροσον φρέαρ (line 8), and τοὺς σοὺς ἀγωγοὺς δαυιλῶς ἀναστόμου (line 9), would be particularly appropriate for the Virgin of the

¹⁰⁶ Perhaps it is not coincidental that precisely in the first half of the fourteenth century there was a "burst of creativity" among Mamluk glassmakers, who were celebrated for the lamps they created to illuminate mosques and other pious foundations. It is noteworthy that inscriptions became the predominant decorative motif ca. 1300; cf. E. Atil, *Renaissance of Islam: Art of the Mamluks* (Washington, D.C., 1981), 118–23, cat. nos. 52 and 53. Examples of Mamluk decorative arts were sent to Constantinople by the sultan Baybars during the reign of Michael VIII to adorn the mosque constructed by that emperor in 1262; cf. E. Quatremère, *Histoire des sultans mamlouks de l'Égypte écrite en arabe par Taki-eddin Ahmed-Maqrizi*, pt. 1 (Paris, 1837), 177, and A.-M. Talbot, "The Restoration of Constantinople under Michael VIII," *DOP* 47 (1993), 252–53 and notes 64–66.

¹⁰⁷ Philes, ed. Miller, II, 146–47, Par. no. 95. I. Kalavrezou-Maxeiner published recently an English translation of this poem and partial commentary (*Steatite*, I, 80–81). Dr. Kalavrezou's analysis naturally emphasized those verses of the poem alluding to the steatite in which the icon was carved; she did not make any connection between this epigram and the Zoodochos Pege.

¹⁰⁸ My thanks to Lee Sherry for pointing out to me that this verse is apparently an allusion to a passage in the Funeral Oration for Basil by Gregory of Nazianzos: καὶ ταῦτ' ὅν τῳ σιδήρῳ παθεῖν, ὃς μαλάσσεται μὲν τῷ πυρὶ, μένει δὲ ὅμως σίδηρος (ed. F. Boulenger, *Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours funèbres* [Paris, 1908], p. 162, ch. 51.3; PG 36, col. 561c). The connection of verse 3 with the previous two lines remains, however, obscure to me. The verse seems to contrast the permanence of iron (whose essential nature is unchanged by fire) with stone (such as limestone?) which changes when burned. Thus Mary, as the bush unconsumed by fire, is likened to iron. On the other hand, it is unclear why Philes should emphasize the impermanence of stone, when he is praising a steatite icon.

Source, and the κάλπιν of line 10 could refer to a pilgrim bearing a vessel to collect holy water from the spring. The imagery of the Virgin as Burning Bush, as shady mountain, as garden of Christ, and as a God-bedewed well recurs throughout Byzantine hymnography and homiletics.¹⁰⁹ The donor, who has evidently himself benefitted from the healing waters (line 6), has commissioned a silver gilt frame (τῷ τοῦ χρυσαργύρου σε κοσμῶ θριγγίῳ—line 7) for a steatite icon of the Virgin.¹¹⁰ The final line of the poem, “For I bear the golden ewer of faith,” may possibly indicate that the icon actually depicted a pilgrim drawing water, that is, that its iconography resembled that of the fresco in the church of St. John at Mistra (Fig. 5). Ioli Kalavrezou proposed that the word “golden” alluded to a gilding of the image of the pitcher or ewer carved in the steatite.

(14) Εἰς εἰκόνα τῆς θεομήτορος, ὡς ἀπὸ στόματος Νικηφόρου τοῦ Ἀποκαύκου.¹¹¹

Ἡ τῶν Χερουβὶμ ὑπερανωκισμένη
 Καὶ τῶν Σεραφὶμ τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν πυρφόρων,
 Ἡ τῆς ἀρᾶς λύσασα τὴν ἀκοσμίαν,
 Καὶ τῷ γένει βλύσασα τὴν ἀφθαρσίαν,
 5 Ὁ παρθενικὸς τοῦ βασιλέως θρόνος,
 Ὁ μυστικὸς θάλαμος, ἡ θεία κλίνη,
 Ἦν ἀγγέλων φρίττοντα κυκλοῦσι στίφη·
 Τῆς φύσεως ὁ κόσμος, ἡ κοινὴ χάρις,
 Ἡ παντοδαπὴ τῶν τεραστίων χύσις,
 10 Ἡ σωστικὴ δύναμις, ἡ καινὴ κτίσις,
 Ἡ τοῦ γένους πόρρωθεν ἐξειλεγμένη,
 Ὁ τῆς καθαρότητος ὡραῖος τόπος,
 Τὸ τοῦ καθ’ ἡμᾶς ἀντιφάρμακον πάθους,
 Τὸ λαμπρὸν ἀπάνθισμα, τὸ βρύον τέρας,
 15 Ἡ τῆς λογικῆς φλεγμονῆς ὑπερτέρα,
 Ἡ ζῶσα πηγὴ τῶν φιλανθρωπευμάτων,
 Δι’ ἧς μεθ’ ἡμῶν τῆς πνοῆς ὁ δεσπότης,
 Ἔδει μὲν ἦν σέσωκας ἀνθρώπων φύσιν
 Τῇ σῇ φύσει πρέποντας ἀθροΐζειν φόρους·

Ioli Kalavrezou (Kalavrezou, *Steatite*, 81) prefers a translation with the reverse meaning, “Before fire iron does not endure as (this) stone does,” arguing that the verse refers to the fire-resistant quality of steatite, which resembles asbestos in this regard. The problem with the latter solution is that the natural pause in the verse, or comma, would then have to come after οὐ, whereas the caesura (*Binnenschluss*), which indicates the break in the mind of the poet, falls after the seventh syllable of the verse, the last syllable of οἶδης.

¹⁰⁹For the Virgin as shady mountain, cf. Germanos of Constantinople, *or.* 3 (PG 98, col. 308A). Much of Philes’ imagery (the Virgin as mountain, bush, garden, and well) is found in the *enkomion* of Chrysippos of Jerusalem (fifth century) on the Virgin; cf. *Patrologia orientalis* 19 (1925), 337. For other parallels, see G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexikon* (Oxford, 1961–68), s.v. ὄρος, βάτος, κῆπος, and φρέαρ.

The imagery of Christ as the stone (line 5) that binds together the two walls of Gentiles and Jews is found, for example, in Theodoret’s commentary on Ps. 117:22 (ὁ δὲ . . . Χριστὸς τοὺς δύο τοίχους, τοὺς ἀπ’ ἀλλήλων ἐστῶτας ἐκ διαμέτρου [Jews and Gentiles] εἰς ἓν . . . συνέζευξε); see PG 80, col. 1816b. The immaculate conception of Christ by the Virgin is compared with the quarrying of a stone from a mountain without human hands (cf. Dan. 2:34) in the same *enkomion* of Chrysippos quoted at the beginning of this footnote.

¹¹⁰For a parallel use of χρυσάργυρος as an icon revetment, see other poems of Philes where the donor states clearly that he has adorned the icon of the Virgin with gold and silver (καὶ κατακοσμῶ τῷδε τῷ χρυσαργύρῳ / Τοῦ σοῦ τύπου τὸ σχῆμα . . .), cf. *Philes*, ed. Miller, I, 307, Flor. no. 114.14–15, and *Philes*, ed. Martini, p. 89, no. 67.28–29. Cf. also *Philes*, ed. Martini, no. 35.12–13 (καὶ τόνδε κοσμῶ τὸν σεβάσιμον τύπον/ τῷ συνθέτῳ σχήματι τοῦ χρυσαργύρου), and the lemma to Escorial, no. 154 (*Philes*, ed. Miller, I, 65); εἰς εἰκόνα τῆς . . . Θεοτόκου κοσμηθεῖσαν διὰ χρυσαργύρου.

¹¹¹*Philes*, ed. Miller, I, 240–41, Flor. no. 66.

- 20 Ἐπεὶ δὲ νικᾶς πανταχοῦ κατακράτος,
 Τὰ γοῦν κατὰ δύναμιν εὐσπλάγχχνως δέχου,
 Καὶ τοῦτον οἰκεῖν ἀξιοῦσα τὸν δόμον
 Ἄφ' ἐστίας ὃ φασιν ἡμᾶς εὐλόγει.
 Νικήφορος σὸς Ἀπόκαυκος ἱκέτης
 25 Μετὰ φόβου προσεῖπε, σεμνῇ, σοὶ τάδε.

To an icon of the Mother of God, as if from the mouth of Nikephoros Apokaukos

- O thou who hast thy dwelling above the cherubim
 And the fiery seraphims of God,¹¹²
 Thou who hast freed us from the disarray <resulting> from the curse,
 And gushed forth immortality for mankind,
 5 O virginal throne of the King <of Heaven>,
 O mystic bridal chamber, O divine couch,
 Which throngs of angels surround trembling with awe.
 O ornament of nature, O common grace,
 Thou who pourest forth every sort of miracle,
 10 O salvific power, O new creation,
 The elect of our race from of old,
 O beautiful place of purity,
 The healing remedy for our passions,
 The shining flower, the gushing miracle,
 15 Thou who dost surpass passionate utterance,
 The living spring of loving kindness,
 Through whose breath the Lord is with us (?).
 It would have been fitting for humankind which thou hast saved
 To assemble tribute fitting to thy nature;
 20 But since thou dost completely conquer everywhere,
 At least accept mercifully this <offering made> to the best of my ability,
 And deigning to dwell in this house,
 Bless us from the proverbial <first> hearthfire.
 Thy suppliant Nikephoros Apokaukos,
 25 O holy One, has addressed these words to thee with awe.

Although the lemma of this epigram does not specifically refer to Pege, the imagery and vocabulary suggest that this poem may have indeed been addressed to the Virgin as Zoodochos Pege. Such words and phrases as βλύσασα τὴν ἀφθαρσίαν (line 4), ἡ . . . τῶν τεραστίων χύσις (line 9), and ἡ ζῶσα πηγὴ (line 16) are paralleled in other epigrams of Philes which are more surely linked with the Zoodochos Pege,¹¹³ while the phrases τὸ βρύον τέρας (line 14) and τὸ τοῦ καθ' ἡμᾶς ἀντιφάρμακον πάθους (line 13) seem appropriate for the Virgin of healing waters. Lines 3–4 allude to the frequently expressed notion that while Eve was responsible for the fall of man, the Virgin, by giving birth to Christ, was responsible for his salvation. Line 5 conjures up the image of the Christ child sitting on

¹¹²Philes' language here is reminiscent of a well-known Theotokion (W. Christ and M. Paranikas, *Anthologia Graeca Carminum Christianorum* [Leipzig, 1871], 195) used for example in the ninth ode of the Triodion for Good Friday and as the *heirmos* of the ninth ode of the kanon of *orthros*: τὴν τιμιωτάτην τῶν χερουβὶμ καὶ ἐνδοξοτέραν ἀσυγκρίτως τῶν σεραφίμ . . . Cf. E. Follieri, *Initia Hymnorum Ecclesiae Graecae*, IV (Vatican City, 1963), 95–96.

¹¹³For βλύζω and ἀφθαρσίαν, cf. poem 1, line 4, and poem 3, line 1. For χύσις and τεραστίων, cf. poem 3, line 2, and poem 6, line 2. For ζῶσα πηγὴ, cf. poem 6, line 2.

the lap of the Virgin,¹¹⁴ while the throngs of angels in line 7 may refer to the angels who flanked the Virgin in the customary iconography of the Zoodochos Pege (see Fig. 4), although there were only two of them. Lines 18–21 express the *topos* that the donor is unable to make a gift suitable to express his gratitude to the Virgin for her benefaction, but may she mercifully deign to accept his humble donation. It is not clear whether the δόμος in line 22 refers to a church, a private chapel, or house. The proverbial expression in line 23, ἀφ' ἐστίας (meaning literally from “the <first> hearthfire”), suggests that the poet intended the last named; one should note, however, that Philes elsewhere uses δόμος with the meaning of “church,”¹¹⁵ and Xanthopoulos typically uses the word δόμος to refer to the church at Pege.¹¹⁶ Nikephoros Apokaukos, the brother of Alexios and John Apokaukos, is known only from this poem and one reference in the *History* of Katakouzenos.¹¹⁷ In sum, this poem is a prayer addressed to the Virgin, perhaps the Zoodochos Pege, to whom Apokaukos makes an offering, perhaps of an icon he has commissioned. At twenty-five lines, the poem could have been inscribed on the icon itself or more likely on its frame.

(C) ICON OR PAINTING DEPICTING A HEALING MIRACLE AT PEGE

It is possible that at least one epigram by Philes describes an icon or fresco depicting an actual healing miracle which occurred at Pege. The existence of such paintings is confirmed by the *Logos* of Xanthopoulos, who recounts three instances during the reign of Andronikos II in which grateful pilgrims commissioned artists to paint such pictures of their cure by the spring waters. A certain George Maioulios, for example, a merchant from Sparta, was cured of cancer of the genitals and abdomen by anointing the afflicted areas with water and mud from the holy spring. So that the miracle would be remembered, “he had the miracle depicted in color in the church, and through it he brings praise to the Mother of God to this day.”¹¹⁸ Two members of the emperor’s Varangian bodyguard, John Rodelphos and Manuel, were likewise healed at Pege, the former of dropsy, the latter of tumors. As Xanthopoulos notes, “The miracles <that occurred> to both these men are represented in color in the church, so that ever-flowing time not destroy them. For they stand, pointing at their disease, or rather the benefaction of the Mother of God, at the same time holding up their one-edged axes, not so much rejoicing in them as in the assistance of the Mother of God, silently singing the hymn <of praise>.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴For the Virgin as throne, cf., for example, Germanos, PG 98, col. 308A.

¹¹⁵Philes, ed. Miller, I, 122 (Esc. no. 231.1), I, 243 (Flor. no. 68.7).

¹¹⁶Cf. Xanthopoulos, *Logos*, 12 (δίεσι δὲ ὁ ὄχετος κατὰ μέσον τὸν δόμον) and 16 (τὸν νῦν ὀρώμενον ὑπερμεγέθη δόμον . . . ἀνίστησι).

¹¹⁷PLP no. 1192; cf. Kant. III, 364.

¹¹⁸Xanthopoulos, *Logos*, p. 67, *mir.* 49.

¹¹⁹Xanthopoulos, *Logos*, p. 83. Xanthopoulos also recounts that it was from seeing a picture of the miraculous healing that he learned how John, patriarch of Jerusalem under Isaac II Angelos, was cured at Pege of tinnitus and a swollen head (*Logos*, p. 59). Another earlier example of a fresco of a healing miracle is found in the *Miracula* of Kosmas and Damianos; in this case the picture was of a man cured of a fistula at the Kosmidion. In the critical apparatus to the account of this miracle is a sentence which may have been at one point a marginal scholium: “And this <miracle> was depicted in the abode of the saints in the left aisle above the entrance to the *diakonikon*; and one can understand <the story> more exactly in the picture” (Deubner, *Kosmas und Damian*, 176, crit. app. for line 82).

(15) Εἰς εἰκόνα τοῦ Καλλιέργη ὃς ὦν λελωβημένος ὑγιάσθη
παρὰ τῆς θεοτόκου τῆς Πηγῆς.¹²⁰

- Τρανῶς ἐνιδὼν τοῖς ἐσόπτροις τῶν τύπων
Τεραστίου θαύμασον εἰκόνα, ξένε.
Ὁ κείμενος γὰρ καὶ παρεστῶς ἐνθάδε
Βοᾷ σιωπῶν τῆς πανάγνου τὴν χάριν·
- 5 Ὃς ἦν μὲν ἡδὺς ὑπὸ τῆς ἡλικίας,
Καὶ πρὸς μάχας γίγαντος ἐσφρίγα τρόπον·
Ἄλoux δὲ πικρῷ δυσχεροῦς λώβης πάθει,
Καθάπερ ἐχθροῦ δυσμενοῦς τινος βέλει,
Καὶ γνοὺς ἑαυτὸν ἀδρανῆ πρὸς τὴν μάχην,
- 10 Ἐπεῖπερ οὐκ ἦν ἐμφανὴς ὁ τοξότης,
Ὅρᾳ πρὸς αὐτὴν μυστικῶς τὴν παρθένον,
Καὶ τοὺς ἱατροὺς δυσφοροῦντας φαυλίσας
(Οὐκ ἦν γὰρ οὐδὲν συντελοῦν πρὸς τοὺς πόνους
Πορθοῦντας αὐτῷ τῶν μελῶν τὰς ἀκρίδας),
- 15 Ὅπλίζεται μὲν ταῖς ῥοαῖς ταῖς ἐνθάδε
(Χαλκεύεται γὰρ εἰς τὸ πῦρ τῆς καρδίας
Καὶ ῥεῦμα χυτὸν, εἰ θεὸς μόνον θέλει·)
Ἀνθίσταται δὲ τῇ προκύψει τῆς νόσου
Νικῶν τὸν ἐχθρὸν τῇ βολῇ τῆς ἐλπίδος.
- 20 Καὶ νῦν παραστὰς εὐπρεπὴς τῷ δεσπότῃ
Καὶ τῇ στρατηγῷ τῶν ψυχῶν ὑπερμάχῳ
Τὰς ἐμφάσεις δείκνυσι τοῦ τεραστίου.
Ὁ γὰρ τοσοῦτος ὄγκος οὐ δεῖται λόγου·
Δεῖ γοῦν ἐπαινεῖν τῆς γραφῆς τὸν τεχνίτην,
- 25 Ὃς πρὸς τὸν υἱὸν ἀκροώμενον τάχα
Λαλοῦσαν αὐτὴν ζωγραφεῖ τὴν παρθένον·
“Ἐγὼ μὲν, ὦ παῖπ τῷ παρεστῶτι ξένῳ
Τοῦ κινδύνου λέλυκα τὴν ὑποψίαν·
Σὺ δὲ ψυχικὴν ἀντιδοὺς εὐεξίαν
- 30 Τὴν μητρικὴν στήριζον εἰς τοῦτον χάριν.”

*On a picture of Kallierges who, after being maimed by leprosy,
was healed by the Virgin of the Source*

- O stranger, observing clearly in the mirrors of the images,
Marvel at the picture of the miracle.
For the man who is present here lying down
Cries out silently the grace of the all-pure <virgin>.
- 5 He was sweet in his youthful prime,¹²¹
And was vigorous in battle like a giant.
But after being afflicted by the bitter disease of hateful leprosy,
As by the arrow of some hostile foe,
And realizing that he was unequal to the battle,
- 10 Since the archer was not to be seen,
He looks mystically to the Virgin herself,
And, after rejecting the discomfited doctors
(For nothing was of any avail against the pains
Which were destroying the extremities of his limbs),

¹²⁰ Philes, ed. Miller, II, 25–26, Par. no. 11.

¹²¹ Or, perhaps, “he was graceful in his stature.”

- 15 He equips himself with the flowing waters <which you see> here
 (For even a flowing torrent turns into metal
 In the fire¹²² of the heart, if only God wills it);
 And he resists the onset of the disease,
 Triumphant over his foe with the missile of hope.
- 20 And now standing with comely appearance before the Lord
 And the general who is the champion of souls [i.e., the Virgin],¹²³
 He shows the <outward> manifestations of the miracle.¹²⁴
 For so great a swelling requires no words;
 Therefore one should praise the artist for the picture,
- 25 Who paints the Virgin herself speaking
 To her Son who is apparently listening:
 "I, O Son, have delivered the visitor present here
 From apprehensions of <physical> danger.
 Do thou, providing in turn spiritual health,
- 30 Strengthen your mother's grace towards this man."

This epigram on a leper named Kallierges, who was healed by the Virgin of the Source, evidently describes a painting of the miraculous cure, the *τεραστίου . . . εἰκόνα* of line 2 at which the viewer is enjoined to marvel. One interpretation of the poem could be that Philes is referring to a picture which depicts three phases of the incident. Lines 3–14 (note the telltale word *ἐνθάδε* in line 3) allude to an image of the sick man (perhaps with the standard leper's spots) lying bedridden, looking up (?) at the Virgin, his only hope of healing, since the doctors have despaired of his life. Kallierges must be a soldier, to judge from the military metaphors; but in the battle against leprosy he is helpless because the archer who shoots at him is invisible. Lines 15–19 represent phase 2, in which Kallierges drinks from the spring, and the fire of his heart transforms flowing water into a weapon to resist his invisible foe. The *vōv* of line 20 signals a transition to phase 3 (lines 20–22), in which Kallierges, free of leprous blemishes (*εὐπρεπής*), stands before the Virgin and Christ to demonstrate his restored health. Alternatively the poem may describe only a single image of the healed grateful leper, in which case it should be moved to category B. The poet concludes by commenting on the skill of the artist, who has depicted the Virgin speaking to her Son and urging him to heal spiritual ills as she heals physical ones.

Although the lemma of the epigram states that the leper was healed by the Zoodochos Pege, lines 25–26, which describe the Virgin as speaking to her listening son, remind one of the Virgin Eleousa-Christ Antiphonetes pairing we have already encountered in poem 5 above. On the other hand, if *παῖ* in line 27 means "child" rather than "son," it is possible that the Virgin and Christ are depicted in the typical iconography of the Zoodochos Pege, with the Mother holding her Child frontally, or in a pose like the Glykophilousa, in which the Virgin might be imagined to be talking to her baby.

Kallierges, who is known only from this poem,¹²⁵ evidently commissioned a painting

¹²²The preposition *εἰς* (in *εἰς τὸ πῦρ*) is used here instead of *ἐν*; cf. *πρὸς γὰρ τὸ πῦρ* in poem 13 above, line 3.

¹²³An allusion to line 1 of the second proemium of the Akathistos Hymn; cf. C. Trypanis, *Fourteen Early Byzantine Cantica* (Vienna, 1968), 29: *τῇ ὑπερμάχῳ στρατηγῷ τὰ νικητήρια*.

¹²⁴It is possible that *τεράστιον* here means "monstrous thing," referring to the leprosy, but I prefer the meaning of "miracle," which is frequently attested in Philes' poetry.

¹²⁵*PLP*, 10359. S. Pelekanides has rejected the suggestion that the leper should be identified with the painter George Kallierges (*PLP*, 10367); cf. *Καλλιεργής, ὁλῆς Θεσσαλίας ἄριστος ζωγράφος* (Athens, 1973), 92.

in thanksgiving for his cure and at the same time asked Philes to compose an appropriate epigram. At thirty lines the poem was probably too long to have been included as an inscription on the actual picture; perhaps only the first two lines were accommodated on the picture or icon frame.

Two other instances of healing from leprosy at Pege in the early fourteenth century are attested by Xanthopoulos: an anonymous poor man anointed his sores with water and mud from the spring over a long period of time, and also applied the leaves of plants which grew at the outflow of the spring, outside the church, while a certain Theodore washed himself with the holy water and vowed to abstain from meat if cured.¹²⁶

CONCLUSION

When examined as a group, the epigrams of Philes on the Theotokos tes Peges enhance our understanding of the relationship between personal piety (devotion to the Virgin of the Source), pilgrimage to her shrine, especially in search of healing, and patronage (the commissioning of objects of art and poems in her honor). The first category of poems (anonymous with the exception of no. 3, written on behalf of the priest Gabriel), were short epigrams evidently composed by Philes to be inscribed on icons or monumental paintings (or, in one case, a *panagiarion*) of the Virgin; the same epigram may have been used repeatedly.

The epigrams of category B are more personal; most describe a work of art (icon, icon revetment, lamp, or textile) presented to the shrine of the Pege in thanksgiving for a miraculous cure, and included the name of the donor. The sequence of events must have been as follows: the donor decided what sort of object he or she wanted to commission, and then asked Philes to prepare an epigram. The epigram must have been written to order, since it often alludes to the disease from which the donor was healed, the type of art object and the name of the donor. I assume that the shorter epigrams (of 8–12 lines) were then given to the artist to be inscribed or painted on the work of art he had created or was going to create; it is conceivable that even the longer twenty-five-line poems were incorporated into the art object, since the use of abbreviations made it possible to fit many verses into a relatively limited space.

The third category (C) represents an even more personalized commission: the grateful donor asked an artist to make an icon or fresco painting depicting the Virgin of the Source healing his or her disease. In this case there must have been even greater collaboration between artist and poet, for Philes would have had to have some idea of the content of the painting before composing his epigram.

Hagiographical accounts of miraculous healings tend to emphasize that the shrines were free (ἄμισθον ἰατρεῖον) in contrast to the exorbitant fees charged by physicians. Occasionally, however, *miracula* mention architectural additions or embellishments, paintings or deluxe liturgical objects presented by grateful recipients of cures in lieu of

125 ¹²⁶Xanthopoulos, *Logos*, pp. 70–71, 72–73, *mir.* 52 and 54.

cash contributions.¹²⁷ The poems of Philes, which evidently graced many such works of art commissioned by members of the nobility, shed further light on the donation of ex-votos in the Palaiologan period, a tradition which provided work for artists and poets, greatly enhanced the beauty of the healing shrines, and enriched their treasuries.

Dumbarton Oaks

¹²⁷In addition to the textile given to the Kosmidion by Constantine Akropolites (see footnote 98, above), one could cite the donations mentioned in the tenth-century anonymous account of miracles at Pege, for example, *ActaSS*, Nov. III, 880C, 884D-E, 886A. Even though healing at the shrine was “without fee,” some pilgrims did make cash donations; cf. 886C-E.